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SHE STOOPS TO CONQUER



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TORONTO



OLIVER GOLDSMITH

After Sir Joshua Reynolds

She Stoops to Conquer

By
Oliver Goldsmith

With Introduction and Notes by
Robert Herring, M.A.

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INTRODUCTION

1. GOLDSMITH'S CHARACTER AND PERSONALITY

FEW men offer more opportunity for a moral lecture than Oliver Goldsmith, and yet few authors in our literature remain so well loved. He had, as Macaulay over-emphasised, many faults to make us despise him, and yet none of us ever thinks of despising him. He was idle and wasteful ; in his youth he neglected or misused such advantages as came his way ; though he was poor, he was so extravagant that it may almost be said that his way of acknowledging his debts was to contract a further loan, and there is truth in the statement that " in the profession of a writer he achieved success after failing in almost every other profession known to man." But with all this he had virtues not always conspicuous in those more free from fault. He could be kind, he was always generous, and he had pluck. When necessity demanded, he was capable of vigorous work. It must be remembered also that his gifts did not early manifest themselves, and so he lacked that encouragement from his elders which might have resulted in a closer application to study. It was doubtless foolhardy to give a dance in his rooms at Trinity College, Dublin ; but it was lacking in tact on his tutor's part to correct this with corporal punishment, and we cannot fail to admire, if not to approve, the naïveté which, later, in Holland, made him buy for his benefactor a bouquet (which could not possibly last) with the money sent to pay his fare home. That is the difficulty we feel in approaching him : it is so hard to approve, so easy to admire. But it is easier to under-

stand him if we remember that, though he pretended to be a cool, calculating man of the world, he was really the most unguarded of creatures and brought his faults to the surface by his very simplicity. He was, like Farquhar and Sheridan, Irish, and compounded of the most diverse elements, which time only served to accentuate.

In his early days (he was born in 1728), he would endure poverty rather than practise economy. When he reached a position of affluence, he aspired to be well-dressed and elegant, though the awkwardness of his person and the coarseness of his features prevented any such thing. He travelled a great deal, yet he never acquired the ease of manner which travel usually gives, and he was fully aware of this. He suffered, in fact, from what is called an idea of inferiority, and was always trying to rid himself of it.

But the methods he chose were wrong. Instead of confining himself to those realms in which his learning and experience were admitted, he was constantly trying to win applause in arts to which he was a complete stranger. No man of his age wrote with more sweetness or grace, few talked worse. It was characteristic of Goldsmith that he should desire to be a talker, to be thought a wit and to be esteemed for those powers of debate which were so noticeably absent. He wanted to shine in every company and upon every topic; but a stammer stood in the way, and his ideas came too thick and fast for coherence and fluency.

This misdirected ambition ended in his being called "an inspired idiot" by Horace Walpole, a not too friendly critic. But even the staunch Dr. Johnson said that he had "no settled notions upon any subject, so he always talked at random"; and Garrick observed that he "wrote like an angel, and talked like poor Poll." His pen was a more delicate instrument than his tongue, and because he became used to the merited success it brought him, he never quite got over his inability to hold men conversationally. But it was

also Johnson who wrote for his epitaph after his death in 1774 that there was nothing he touched as a writer without adding lustre to it, and it is interesting to see how this came about.

2. HIS WORKS

He drifted into writing as he drifted into everything else, for he had no definite ambition to be an author. "Dreams of future greatness" (one of his biographers relates) "were always connected in his mind with a desire to see the world—a passion too vague and general to admit of any specific plan or even definite object, but which he never failed to manifest whenever occasion offered." After refusing to enter the Church when he left Dublin, he was sent to study law in England. But he lost the fifty pounds given him by an uncle in gambling. He next went to Edinburgh to study physic, being then twenty-four. After leaving without a diploma, he studied variously at Leyden, Louvain, Padua, until, in 1756, the death of this uncle, the Rev. T. Contarine, cut off supplies of money.

He returned to England, to try his luck in London. Here he became in turn an usher, a chemist's assistant, and a medical practitioner (with "an extensive circle of patients but no fees"). The lack of fees drove him to seek employment from the booksellers. He became an occasional writer in periodicals.

Then, in 1759, he published the *Inquiry into the Present State of Polite Learning*. This brought him a reputation for learning and elegance of style. He met Smollett, who introduced him to friends and, being editor of the *British Magazine*, gave him work. A period of activity followed. He conducted a *Lady's Magazine*, he published *The Bee*, a weekly magazine in miniature, and printed his Chinese letters (which formed the *Citizen of the World*) in the *Public Ledger*. Then, in 1761, he finished *The Vicar of Wakefield*, which he sold for £60 in order to extricate himself from the clutches of his

landlady, who threatened him with arrest or marriage. He next wrote a *History of England*, and a *Survey of Experimental Philosophy*. By the money from these, he was now, in 1764, living in the Temple, taking care of his appearance, and feeling no scruple, after his exertions, about enjoying the elegances of life. A year later, on the publication of *The Traveller*, he ceased to be a bookseller's drudge. In eight years it had nine editions, and was called by Fox "one of the finest poems in the English language" and by Johnson "the finest poem since Pope's time." In our own century, Professor Saintsbury has summed it up as "the last really great work of the artificial conventional school of verse, and not far from its greatest."

But he wrote verse slowly, and with extreme care, which led him to look to other ways for a living. In 1768, he produced his first play, *The Good-Natur'd Man*, and then wrote a *History of the Earth and Animated Nature*, from which "more emolument than reputation resulted." He turned to poetry again, writing *The Deserted Village*. But he was conscious that poetry brought more fame than fortune, and his improvidence rendered fortune necessary to him. In his own terms, he found that "by courting the Muses, I shall starve; but by my other labours, I eat, drink, have good clothes and enjoy the luxuries of life."

But though these labours were what we call hack-work, he had a gift of versatility which prevented any signs of drudgery, and an easy, agreeable style which atoned for any negligence. It could be truthfully said by Scott that "we close his volumes with a sigh that such an author should have written so little from the stores of his own genius," and by Johnson that "whatever he wrote, he did it better than any other man could do." He has been called "the greatest of all miscellaneous writers on the lighter side in the eighteenth century," and this is due to a style whose "language was copious without exuberance, exact without constraint, and easy without weakness."

In 1773, he returned to the theatre, which had given him £500 for his first play, and produced *She Stoops to Conquer*. The significance of this comedy in the history of English drama is so important that we should do well to consider this before examining its plot and construction.

3. *SHE STOOPS TO CONQUER*: ITS HISTORY

In 1759, Goldsmith had attacked the sentimental dramatists of the day in *The Present State of Polite Learning*. Nine years later he put his theories into practice with *The Good-Natur'd Man*. This play was a new departure, because it dealt with "low" persons. Nearly all the plays of the period treated of the foibles of fashion: Goldsmith chose the humours and characters of ordinary persons, who were not rendered alike by affectation. The efforts of dramatists to preserve the wit while altering the spirit of the earlier writers had led to a purification, but also to a falsification, of character, and this falsifying persisted when authors wrote plays on their own.

Comedy had to be genteel, and, with that object, had frequently to shun "nature"; against this shunning and falsification, Goldsmith stood out. He brought back not the wit of Congreve, but the spirit of Shakespeare, expressing a hope in the preface to his first play that "too much refinement will not banish humour and character from ours, as it has already done from the French théâtre." It is here that he differed from Sheridan, who was only anxious to restore the comedy of manners to its original elegance; but both were fighting a common foe. Immediately before the production of *She Stoops to Conquer*, Goldsmith contributed an essay on the theatre to *The Westminster Magazine*, and in this play it will be noticed none of the characters belong to the smartest world, the scene is neither in Bath nor London, and nature and humour prevail over wit. Goldsmith is more progressive than Sheridan, because, without knowing it, he takes into

account the romantic movement. He evolves a comedy which definitely expresses the return to nature, along with the reaction from sentimentality. Sheridan is content, in *The School for Scandal*, to do better what others were trying to do ; he restores, while Goldsmith creates.

George Colman, the manager of Covent Garden, thought little of this new piece ; but Johnson "stood forth in all his terrors as champion," and it was put on, not without qualms, for the actors were not enthusiastic and there "was trouble with the epilogue. Five were written, but as none of these are very good, I have not reprinted them, lest I should borrow the reader's attention merely to dull it.

Cumberland in his *Memoirs* gives an amusing account of the first performance. The friends of the poet, "not oversanguine of success but perfectly determined to struggle hard for our author," had allotted posts in the theatre and pre-arranged signals for applause. One of them, Adam Drummond, had a laugh at once loud and contagious, and he was planted where the echo would give this laugh fullest play. Dr. Johnson sat in the front of a side-box, and such was his reputation that, when he laughed, everybody else roared. Drummond, however, laughed so loud and so long that the pit grew angry and the play was in danger of being ruined. But its genuine merits tided this over, and it was received with acclamation ("I know of no comedy for many years," said Johnson, "that has so much exhilarated an audience"), although the actor who played Marlow had previously been only a harlequin and another prominent character had sustained no larger a part than post-boy in Goldsmith's earlier comedy. Some members of the audience disapproved of the extravagance of the deception played on Mrs. Hardcastle. The author thereupon ran up to Colman, and asked the reason of the murmurings. "Pshaw! Doctor," said the manager, "don't be terrified at squibs when we have been sitting these two hours upon a barrel of gunpowder."

The gunpowder, instead of blowing up, proved not a flash in the pan but what firework-makers call a "set-piece," for it was given on every available night till the season closed on 31st May, Foote produced it during the summer at the Hay-market, and in November it continued at Covent Garden. Two command performances were given before the King, and, it may be added—since it was to make money that he wrote it—Goldsmith drew £800 from the piece.

4. ITS ACTION

Mrs. Hardcastle has two children : a daughter, Kate, and Tony Lumpkin, a son by a previous marriage. She wishes her son to marry her niece, Constance Neville, whose fortune will then be kept in the family. Miss Neville, however, happens to be in love with a young man in London, and Tony on his side will have none of her, being interested only in a country-girl and waiting till he shall come of age to be his own master.

Mr. Hardcastle, meanwhile, has arranged for the son of his friend, Sir Charles Marlow, to visit him, with a view to marrying his daughter. Young Marlow, though easy enough in low company, is shy with women of his own class and brings his friend Hastings to stand by him.

They lose their way, and on inquiring for a bed at an ale-house, are directed by Tony Lumpkin to the Hardcastle home, which they are told is an inn. They therefore enter with full assurance and swagger, and order Mr. Hardcastle about, thinking he is the landlord. He, after all the reports of Marlow's modesty, is shocked by their behaviour, but puts it down to youth and the manners of London. They in their turn cannot make out why he forces his company upon them.

Miss Neville, visiting Kate Hardcastle, recognises her lover in Hastings. She tells him the truth. As a joke on Marlow, they do not tell him, but arrange an interview with Kate.

(This leaves them free for their own conversation.) Marlow is so nervous that Kate, who falls in love with him, despairs of ever winning him ; so, taking advantage of Marlow's mistake about the house, she decides to *stoop* in order to conquer, and pretends to be a barmaid. Marlow's manners at once undergo a change.

Hastings and Miss Neville plan to elope, and Tony, out of gratitude at being left free, arranges to help them. A letter written him by Hastings falls, however, into his mother's hands, and she drags off her niece. Tony, seeing a chance to make up for his mistake, undertakes to drive them, and proceeds, not straight, but round and round, ending at the bottom of the garden where Hastings is waiting, as arranged. This prank is discovered by Mr. Hardcastle, who has learnt of the other trick from Sir Charles, just arrived. (The arrival of relations is a stock incident in comedies ; for example, Sir Oliver Surface in *The School for Scandal*.) Explanations follow ; Marlow discovers the identity of his barmaid, and Tony is declared to have been of age all the time, his mother having hidden the fact to keep control of his money. He at once renounces all claims to his cousin, who is thus able to marry Hastings, while Tony is free for his country-girl. The play ends with Mrs. Hardcastle's silent discomfiture. The future relationship of her and her husband is not hinted at, but as she will have no more fortunes to manage and he has done nothing to correct his own weakness, it may be presumed that it will perforce be much the same.

5. ITS CONSTRUCTION

The play is neatly built, and abounds in clues from the beginning. Almost at once, Mrs. Hardcastle makes clear that the house resembles an inn, and her husband, told he must allow Tony a little humour, observes, " I'd sooner allow him a horse-pond "—of which Tony, in the last act, liberally

avails himself. Again, Miss Hardcastle, after her first interview with Marlow, says, "He scarce looked in my face the whole time," and this makes plausible his failure to recognise her as a barmaid, for which part she is already dressed, following her father's wishes flung at her on her first appearance. In the first scene, too, Tony is seen to be spoilt by Mrs. Hardcastle, who reveals herself as a shrew and a schemer. Marriage is broached, Miss Neville is known to be engaged, and we are prepared for Tony to be at the alehouse and for the arrival of the two friends from London. In the second scene, Tony announces his desire for independence and his love of horses and Bet Bouncer. The young men arrive and are misdirected. The act closes, leaving us in anticipation of the results.

In the second act the friends arrive at Hardcastle's. Kate is disappointed in Marlow, and there is an instance of Miss Neville being forced upon Lumpkin. A scene shows us Tony promising to help Hastings, Marlow's friend, to elope. Tony helps, because he can then marry Bet Bouncer. All this leads up to the unravelling of the plot, which begins in Act 3. Mr. Hardcastle and his daughter, by now in love, exchange opinions on Marlow. She stoops. In the fourth act, the arrival of Marlow's father is announced. Marlow himself begins to realise his mistake: Hastings makes one, and the elopement is ruined. Miss Neville is carried off by her aunt, and Tony has another idea, which is unfolded in the last act. Sir Charles Marlow and Hardcastle explain to each other. Kate explains her ruse of being a barmaid. Tony reveals what he has done by landing his mother's coach in the horse-pond. Marlow's character is understood, Hastings and Miss Neville are forgiven, and Tony's being of age is disclosed. The play ends with Tony "his own man again," free for marriage with Bet Bouncer.

The title is somewhat misleading, for the central character is not Miss Hardcastle, but Tony Lumpkin. Though the

main incident is her "stooping" to be a barmaid, this could not have occurred, even had Marlow been never so cold, had not Tony first misdirected the travellers: and largely as Mrs. Hardcastle may loom in the working of the secondary plot (that of Miss Neville's marriage and fortune), all her machinations are for her son. Tony is the chief figure, but he is more than this. He is the chief interest, and not merely a pillar that gives stability to the other players—not merely a may-pole round which the ribbons of the piece are plaited. What Tony says he will do, he does. His original wishes are accomplished, the promises forced upon him fulfilled. He even succeeds in "getting his own back." His affections are settled before the play begins, and they undergo no change. He is able to play pranks on his stepfather, show up his mother and assist his cousin, because of his admiration for the unseen Bet Bouncer. Had he liked Constance Neville, or had his mother spoilt him less, he would not have been at *The Three Pigeons* when Marlow arrived.

It will be seen that the action is simple. Mr. Hardcastle plans for his daughter's marriage as his wife plans for her son's. As he is not very keen on marrying, her interest in Miss Neville makes up the weight of marriage-interest in her side of the balance. The play opens with a mistaken journey and ends with one; the first journey sets the play in motion, the second rounds it off. Lumpkin's cleverness with the jewels is cancelled by his obtuseness over the letter, but he atones for his mistake by the drive at the end. Mrs. Hardcastle desires a change and a journey in the first scene; she has her journey, and the marriages all round, leaving the old mansion duller than ever, will supply the change.

6. ITS DIALOGUE AND CHARACTERISATION

The most striking quality of this play is its characterisation. It is this which has made it dispute with *The School for Scandal*

the position of being not only the best-known play of the eighteenth century, but also, outside Shakespeare, the most frequently acted in the English language. Goldsmith's dialogue is easy and natural—but therefore at times somewhat rough; and his wit, though it never quite comes up to Congreve's, is the natural flowering of the play, and not, as in so many plays of the period, artificial foliage stuck on the barren tree of the action.

Goldsmith's most enjoyed days had been in the country, on the roads of Europe, from town to town in Ireland and from inn to inn. How happy they were is shown by the directness with which they go into his work. His days in town had been periods of revelry alternating with periods of fasting. There had been hunger and hack-work; and, remembering these, he made Hastings and Marlow young rich men, with no livings to earn and little ambition to satisfy. Memory here received a twist, but it is memory all the same; joys were remembered and misfortunes only called to mind the pleasure they displaced, until *She Stoops to Conquer* became a comedy of youth, the first since Shakespeare. In it Goldsmith blended his memories into a strand of young men: young men oppressed, young men delivering; young men stockish and young men of fashion. He combined in this play what he wanted to be (in Hastings and Marlow) and what he saw he had been (in Tony Lumpkin). The pleasures they enjoy, the atmosphere they breathe, are those Goldsmith most loved to enjoy and breathe, open-air pleasures side by side with the delights of the town. It is true that town outnumbers country by two to one, and that Mrs. Hardcastle complains of country dulness; but that is the convention, and everyone will notice how little news Marlow and Hastings bring with them from London. The fact is that, if Sheridan liked Bath society and London rendezvous for his settings (as Congreve did), Goldsmith, like Farquhar, is more at home in inns and country houses.

With Sheridan's dialogue, there is a certain monotony about much of its brilliance. One reads on, after a time, mechanically. The ear is pleasantly touched, but one does not very often penetrate through, to what is being, not merely said, but *expressed*. The dazzling surface seems to be easier to glide over than to pierce. It positively, in fact, encourages gliding. But Goldsmith's dialogue, in helping along the play, helps on character. There is in it little fine prose—not so much as in *The Beaux' Stratagem*—and Miss Hardcastle's remark, that she will break her glass for its flattery, is as near as he gets to a cadence. But by the end of the play, it has enabled us to know more of the characters than it would seem to have said, and just how much this means must be considered.

It means that a flowing pen (Goldsmith wrote easily in prose, writing quickly and altering little) has been subjected to the needs of character, and that that character has in each case been so visualised and understood that it in turn lights up the dialogue and infuses it with a sense of its own individuality. It is comparatively simple to indicate a person by giving him some trick of speech or gesture; that is external. It is not so simple to let that speech or gesture be dictated by the inner traits of character, but this is what Goldsmith does. The people in this play we know far better than the action suggests. Maria of *The School for Scandal* is a bloodless ghost compared to Miss Neville, and what an advance on the heroes of *The Beaux' Stratagem* are Marlow and Hastings! Goldsmith may not reach the subtlety of a Millamant, but his characters are by no means as "simple" as those of more artificial pretentious writers who put into their puppets' mouths epigrams which the puppets, to all seeming, would never have had the brain to invent. Mrs. Hardcastle could so readily have been "depicted" as a miser, but instead Goldsmith insists on her fondness for her son; her scheming is a compound of love of money *and* love of him. Some dramatists leave the strings of characterisation showing; you see

them being pulled, to jerk the puppets into movement. But this author weaves the threads, as in life.

It is natural that Tony should revolt from being so excessively coddled, and yet observe how (being his mother's son) he has an eye always on the money. The same family trait may be noticed in Miss Neville, who, though only a niece of Mrs. Hardcastle, shows a keen determination not to lose her jewels. Tony may be slow, but he is shrewd. It should be noticed, too, that Tony, the country squire, bristles at the two bucks from town. He misdirects them because they wound his self-esteem. His answer, when they unwittingly let him know he has the reputation of being "an awkward booby," is that he is "afraid they will not reach their destination to-night." He decides to take a rise out of them, and actually goes one better, and lets them reach their destination without knowing it. In all his cumbersome plots, he is trying to prove his brain as nimble as theirs, and all the time he is discovering that they are young men, too; that the differences are mainly those of phrase and fashion, and that they, too, are suffering from the plans of their elders. This makes him ready to help, even to the extent of robbing his mother (of what, it is true, is only temporarily hers).

The girls also are something more than simpering misses. They are resourceful, sincere, but also vain enough, coquettish enough, above all, individual enough. Mr. Hardcastle, too, familiar type though he is, is more than a type. There has been many a downtrodden husband on the stage, but a husband's repressed revolt bursting out in a favouring of all his stepson's misdeeds against his mother has not so often been shown, and never so subtly. Tony is hardly ever rude or rebellious without some approving aside from Mr. Hardcastle, who is always ready to find morality in his replies, and Mrs. Hardcastle can never propound some new way of spoiling her son without Mr. Hardcastle doing all he can to get Tony out of it, knowing what he has himself endured. Tony himself

has much affinity with Humphrey Gubbins in Steele's *Tender Husband*, where there is the same withholding of a fortune, the same pretence of minority, and the same attempt to marry him to a wife who rejects him and whom he rejects. Another comedy of Steele, *The Funeral*, though it did not really supply in Lord Hardy a model for Marlow, suggested Hardcastle's scene with his servants by a scene in which the undertakers are drilled.

SHE STOOPS TO CONQUER

OR

THE MISTAKES OF A NIGHT

A COMEDY

To SAMUEL JOHNSON, LL.D.

DEAR SIR,—By inscribing this slight performance to you, I do not mean so much to compliment you as myself. It may do me some honour to inform the public, that I have lived many years in intimacy with you. It may serve the interests of mankind also to inform them, that the greatest wit may be found in a character, without impairing the most unaffected piety.

I have, particularly, reason to thank you for your partiality to this performance. The undertaking a comedy not merely sentimental was very dangerous ; 10 and Mr. Colman, who saw this piece in its various stages, always thought it so. However, I ventured to trust it to the public ; and, though it was necessarily delayed till late in the season, I have every reason to be grateful.

I am, dear Sir, your most sincere friend and admirer, 15

OLIVER GOLDSMITH.

PROLOGUE

BY DAVID GARRICK, ESQ.

*Enter MR. WOODWARD, dressed in black, and holding
a handkerchief to his eyes*

Excuse me, sirs, I pray—I can't yet speak—

I'm crying now—and have been all the week.

“ 'Tis not alone this mourning suit,” good masters :

“ I've that within ”—for which there are no plasters !

Pray, would you know the reason why I'm crying ?

The Comic Muse, long sick, is now a-dying !

And if she goes, my tears will never stop ;

For as a player, I can't squeeze out one drop :

I am undone, that's all—shall lose my bread—

10 I'd rather, but that's nothing—lose my head.

When the sweet maid is laid upon the bier,

Shuter and I shall be chief mourners here.

To her a mawkish drab of spurious breed,

Who deals in sentimentals, will succeed !

Poor Ned and I are dead to all intents ;

We can as soon speak Greek as sentiments !

Both nervous grown, to keep our spirits up.

We now and then take down a hearty cup.

What shall we do ? If Comedy forsake us,

20 They'll turn us out, and no one else will take us.

But why can't I be moral ?—Let me try—

My heart thus pressing—fix'd my face and eye—
With a sententious look, that nothing means
(Faces are blocks in sentimental scenes),
Thus I begin : “ All is not gold that glitters,
Pleasure seems sweet, but proves a glass of bitters.
When Ignorance enters, Folly is at hand :
Learning is better far than house and land.
Let not your virtue trip ; who trips may stumble,
And virtue is not virtue, if she tumble.” 30

I give it up—morals won't do for me ;
To make you laugh, I must play tragedy.
One hope remains—hearing the maid was ill,
A Doctor comes this night to show his skill.
To cheer her heart, and give your muscles motion,
He, in Five Draughts prepar'd, presents a potion :
A kind of magic charm—for be assur'd,
If you will swallow it, the maid is cur'd :
But desperate the Doctor, and her case is,
If you reject the dose, and make wry faces ! 40
This truth he boasts, will boast it while he lives,
No poisonous drugs are mixed in what he gives.
Should he succeed, you'll give him his degree ;
If not, within he will receive no fee !
The College, *you*, must his pretensions back,
Pronounce him Regular, or dub him Quack.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

MEN

| | | | | |
|------------------------|---|---|---|-----------------------|
| SIR CHARLES MARLOW | - | - | - | <i>Mr. Gardner.</i> |
| YOUNG MARLOW (HIS SON) | - | - | - | <i>Mr. Lewes.</i> |
| HARDCASTLE | - | - | - | <i>Mr. Shuter.</i> |
| HASTINGS | - | - | - | <i>Mr. Dubellamy.</i> |
| TONY LUMPKIN | - | - | - | <i>Mr. Quick.</i> |
| DIGGORY | - | - | - | <i>Mr. Saunders.</i> |

WOMEN

| | | | | |
|-----------------|---|---|---|-----------------------|
| MRS. HARDCASTLE | - | - | - | <i>Mrs. Green.</i> |
| MISS HARDCASTLE | - | - | - | <i>Mrs. Bulkley.</i> |
| MISS NEVILLE | - | - | - | <i>Mrs. Kniveton.</i> |
| MAID | - | - | - | <i>Miss Williams.</i> |

Landlord, Servants, etc., etc.

ACT THE FIRST

SCENE—*A Chamber in an old-fashioned House*

Enter MRS. HARDCASTLE and MR. HARDCASTLE

Mrs. Hard. I vow, Mr. Hardcastle, you're very particular. Is there a creature in the whole country but ourselves, that does not take a trip to town now and then, to rub off the rust a little? There's the two Miss Hoggs, and our neighbour Mrs. Grigsby, go to take a month's polishing every winter.

Hard. Ay, and bring back vanity and affectation to last them the whole year. I wonder why London cannot keep its own fools at home! In my time, the follies of the town crept slowly among us, but now they travel 10 faster than a stage-coach. Its fopperies come down not only as inside passengers, but in the very basket.

Mrs. Hard. Ay, your times were fine times indeed; you have been telling us of them for many a long year. Here we live in an old rumbling mansion, that looks for all the world like an inn, but that we never see company. Our best visitors are old Mrs. Oddfish, the curate's wife, and little Cripplegate, the lame dancing-master; and all our entertainment your old stories of Prince Eugene and the Duke of Marlborough. I hate such old-fashioned 20 trumpery.

Hard. And I love it. I love everything that's old: old friends, old times, old manners, old books, old wine;

and I believe, Dorothy (*taking her hand*), you'll own I have been pretty fond of an old wife.

Mrs. Hard. Lord, Mr. Hardcastle, you're for ever at your Dorothys and your old wives. You may be a Darby, but I'll be no Joan, I promise you. I'm not so old as you'd make me, by more than one good year. Add
30 twenty to twenty, and make money of that.

Hard. Let me see; twenty added to twenty makes just fifty and seven.

Mrs. Hard. It's false, Mr. Hardcastle: I was but twenty when I was brought to bed of Tony, that I had by Mr. Lumpkin, my first husband; and he's not come to years of discretion yet.

Hard. Nor ever will, I dare answer for him. Ay, you have taught him finely.

Mrs. Hard. No matter. Tony Lumpkin has a good
40 fortune. My son is not to live by his learning. I don't think a boy wants much learning to spend fifteen hundred a year.

Hard. Learning, quotha! A mere composition of tricks and mischief.

Mrs. Hard. Humour, my dear; nothing but humour. Come, Mr. Hardcastle, you must allow the boy a little humour.

Hard. I'd sooner allow him a horse-pond. If burning the footmen's shoes, frightening the maids, and worrying
50 the kittens be humour, he has it. It was but yesterday he fastened my wig to the back of my chair, and when I went to make a bow, I popped my bald head in Mrs. Frizzle's face.

Mrs. Hard. And am I to blame? The poor boy was always too sickly to do any good. A school would be his

death. When he comes to be a little stronger, who knows what a year or two's Latin may do for him?

Hard. Latin for him! A cat and fiddle. No, no; the alehouse and the stable are the only schools he'll ever go to.

60

Mrs. Hard. Well, we must not snub the poor boy now, for I believe we shan't have him long among us. Anybody that looks in his face may see he's consumptive.

Hard. Ay, if growing too fat be one of the symptoms.

Mrs. Hard. He coughs sometimes.

Hard. Yes, when his liquor goes the wrong way.

Mrs. Hard. I'm actually afraid of his lungs.

Hard. And truly so am I; for he sometimes whoops like a speaking trumpet—(*Tony hallooing behind the scenes*)—O, there he goes—a very consumptive figure, 70 truly.

Enter TONY, crossing the stage

Mrs. Hard. Tony, where are you going, my charmer? Won't you give papa and I a little of your company, lovey?

Tony. I'm in haste, mother; I cannot stay.

Mrs. Hard. You shan't venture out this raw evening, my dear; you look most shockingly.

Tony. I can't stay, I tell you. The Three Pigeons expects me down every moment. There's some fun going forward.

80

Hard. Ay, the alehouse, the old place; I thought so.

Mrs. Hard. A low, paltry set of fellows.

Tony. Not so low, neither. There's Dick Muggins the exciseman, Jack Slang the horse doctor, little Aminadab that grinds the music box, and Tom Twist that spins the pewter platter.

Mrs. Hard. Pray, my dear, disappoint them for one night at least.

Tony. As for disappointing them, I should not so much mind ; but I can't abide to disappoint myself.

Mrs. Hard. [*Detaining him.*—You shan't go.

Tony. I will, I tell you.

Mrs. Hard. I say you shan't.

Tony. We'll see which is strongest, you or I.

[*Exit, hauling her out.*

Hard. [*Alone.*—Ay, there goes a pair that only spoil each other. But is not the whole age in a combination to drive sense and discretion out of doors ? There's my pretty darling Kate ; the fashions of the times have almost infected her too. By living a year or two in town, she is as fond of gauze and French frippery as the best of them.

Enter MISS HARDCASTLE

Hard. Blessings on my pretty innocence ! dressed out as usual, my Kate. Goodness ! What a quantity of superfluous silk hast thou got about thee, girl ! I could never teach the fools of this age, that the indigent world could be clothed out of the trimmings of the vain.

Miss Hard. You know our agreement, sir. You allow me the morning to receive and pay visits, and to dress in my own manner ; and in the evening I put on my housewife's dress to please you.

Hard. Well, remember, I insist on the terms of our agreement ; and, by the bye, I believe I shall have occasion to try your obedience this very evening.

Miss Hard. I protest, sir, I don't comprehend your meaning.

Hard. Then to be plain with you, Kate, I expect the young gentleman I have chosen to be your husband from town this very day. I have his father's letter, in which he informs me his son is set out, and that he intends to follow himself shortly after. 120

Miss Hard. Indeed ! I wish I had known something of this before. Bless me, how shall I behave ? It's a thousand to one I shan't like him ; our meeting will be so formal, and so like a thing of business, that I shall find no room for friendship or esteem.

Hard. Depend upon it, child, I'll never control your choice ; but Mr. Marlow, whom I have pitched upon, is the son of my old friend, Sir Charles Marlow, of whom you have heard me talk so often. The young gentleman has been bred a scholar, and is designed for an employment in the service of his country. I am told he's a man of an excellent understanding. 130

Miss Hard. Is he ?

Hard. Very generous.

Miss Hard. I believe I shall like him.

Hard. Young and brave.

Miss Hard. I'm sure I shall like him.

Hard. And very handsome.

Miss Hard. My dear papa, say no more (*kissing his hand*), he's mine ; I'll have him. 140

Hard. And to crown all, Kate, he's one of the most bashful and reserved young fellows in all the world.

Miss Hard. Eh ! you have frozen me to death again. That word *reserved* has undone all the rest of his accomplishments. A reserved lover, it is said, always makes a suspicious husband.

Hard. On the contrary, modesty seldom resides in a

breast that is not enriched with nobler virtues. It was the very feature in his character that first struck me.

150 *Miss Hard.* He must have more striking features to catch me, I promise you. However, if he be so young, so handsome, and so everything as you mention, I believe he'll do still. I think I'll have him.

Hard. Ay, Kate, but there is still an obstacle. It's more than an even wager he may not have you.

Miss Hard. My dear papa, why will you mortify one so? Well, if he refuses, instead of breaking my heart at his indifference, I'll only break my glass for its flattery, set my cap to some newer fashion, and look out for some
160 less difficult admirer.

Hard. Bravely resolved! In the mean time I'll go prepare the servants for his reception: as we seldom see company, they want as much training as a company of recruits the first day's muster. *[Exit.]*

Miss Hard. *[Alone.]*—Lud, this news of papa's puts me all in a flutter. Young, handsome: these he put last; but I put them foremost. Sensible, good-natured; I like all that. But then reserved and sheepish; that's much against him. Yet can't he be cured of his timidity,
170 by being taught to be proud of his wife? Yes, and can't I—But I vow I'm disposing of the husband before I have secured the lover.

Enter MISS NEVILLE

Miss Hard. I'm glad you're come, Neville, my dear. Tell me, Constance, how do I look this evening? Is there anything whimsical about me? Is it one of my well-looking days, child? Am I in face to-day?

Miss Nev. Perfectly, my dear. Yet now I look again

—bless me !—sure no accident has happened among the canary birds or the gold fishes ? Has your brother or the cat been meddling ? or has the last novel been 180 too moving ?

Miss Hard. No ; nothing of all this. I have been threatened—I can scarce get it out—I have been threatened with a lover !

*Miss Nev.** And his name——

Miss Hard. Is Marlow.

Miss Nev. Indeed !

Miss Hard. The son of Sir Charles Marlow.

Miss Nev. As I live, the most intimate friend of Mr. Hastings, my admirer. They are never asunder. I 190 believe you must have seen him when we lived in town.

Miss Hard. Never.

Miss Nev. He's a very singular character, I assure you. Among women of reputation and virtue he is the modestest man alive ; but his acquaintance give him a very different character among creatures of another stamp : you understand me.

Miss Hard. An odd character, indeed. I shall never be able to manage him. What shall I do ? Pshaw, think no more of him, but trust to occurrences for success. 200 But how goes on your own affair, my dear ? Has my mother been courting you for my brother Tony as usual ?

Miss Nev. I have just come from one of our agreeable tête-à-têtes. She has been saying a hundred tender things, and setting off her pretty monster as the very pink of perfection.

Miss Hard. And her partiality is such, that she actually thinks him so. A fortune like yours is no small temptation. Besides, as she has the sole management

210 of it, I'm not surprised to see her unwilling to let it go
out of the family.

Miss Nev. A fortune like mine, which chiefly consists
in jewels, is no such mighty temptation. But at any
rate, if my dear Hastings be but constant, I make no
doubt to be too hard for her at last. However, I let her
suppose that I am in love with her son ; and she never
once dreams that my affections are fixed upon another.

Miss Hard. My good brother holds out stoutly. I
could almost love him for hating you so.

220 *Miss Nev.* It is a good-natured creature at bottom,
and I'm sure would wish to see me married to anybody
but himself. But my aunt's bell rings for our afternoon's
walk round the improvements. *Allons !* Courage is
necessary, as our affairs are critical.

Miss Hard. " Would it were bed-time, and all were
226 well." [*Exeunt.*

SCENE—*An Alehouse Room. Several shabby Fellows with
punch and tobacco. TONY at the head of the table, a
little higher than the rest ; a mallet in his hand.*

Omnes. Hurree ! hurree ! hurree ! bravo !

First Fel. Now, gentlemen, silence for a song. The
'squire is going to knock himself down for a song.

Omnes. Ay, a song, a song !

Tony. Then I'll sing you, gentlemen, a song I made
upon this alehouse, the Three Pigeons.

SONG

Let schoolmasters puzzle their brain

With grammar, and nonsense, and learning,

Good liquor, I stoutly maintain,

Gives *genus* a better discerning.

Let them brag of their heathenish gods,
 Their Lethes, their Styxes, and Stygians.
 Their Quis, and their Quæes, and their Quods,
 They're all but a parcel of Pigeons.

Toroddle, toroddle, toroll.

When methodist preachers come down,
 A-preaching that drinking is sinful,
 I'll wage the rascals a crown,
 They always preach best with a skinful.
 But when you come down with your pence,
 For a slice of their scurvy religion,
 I'll leave it to all men of sense,
 But you, my good friend, are the pigeon.

20

Toroddle, toroddle, toroll.

Then come, put the jorum about,
 And let us be merry and clever,
 Our hearts and our liquors are stout,
 Here's the Three Jolly Pigeons for ever.
 Let some cry up woodcock or hare,
 Your bustards, your ducks, and your widgeons ;
 But of all the *gay* birds in the air,
 Here's a health to the Three Jolly Pigeons.

30

Toroddle, toroddle, toroll.

Omnes. Bravo, bravo !

First Fel. The 'squire has got spunk in him.

Second Fel. I loves to hear him sing, bekeays he never
 gives us nothing that's low.

Third Fel. O damn anything that's low, I cannot
 bear it.

Fourth Fel. The genteel thing is the genteel thing any 40
 time : if so be that a gentleman bees in a concatenation
 accordingly.

Third Fel. I likes the maxum of it, Master Muggins. What, though I am obligated to dance a bear, a man may be a gentleman for all that. May this be my poison, if my bear ever dances but to the very genteelost of tunes ; " Water Parted," or the Minuet in " Ariadne."

Second Fel. What a pity it is the 'squire is not come to his own. It would be well for all the publicans within
50 ten miles round of him.

Tony. Ecod, and so it would, Master Slang. I'd then show what it was to keep choice of company.

Second Fel. O he takes after his own father for that. To be sure old 'Squire Lumpkin was the finest gentleman I ever set my eyes on. For winding the straight horn, or beating a thicket for a hare, or a wench, he never had his fellow. It was a saying in the place, that he kept the best horses, dogs, and girls, in the whole county.

Tony. Ecod, and when I'm of age, I'll be no bastard,
60 I promise you. I have been thinking of Bet Bouncer and the miller's grey mare to begin with. But come, my boys, drink about and be merry, for you pay no reckon-
ing. Well, Stingo, what's the matter ?

Enter LANDLORD

Land. There be two gentlemen in a post-chaise at the door. They have lost their way upo' the forest ; and they are talking something about Mr. Hardcastle.

Tony. As sure as can be, one of them must be the gentleman that's coming down to court my sister. Do they seem to be Londoners ?

70 *Land.* I believe they may. They look woundily like Frenchmen.

Tony. Then desire them to step this way, and I'll set

them right in a twinkling. [*Exit LANDLORD.*] Gentlemen, as they mayn't be good enough company for you, step down for a moment, and I'll be with you in the squeezing of a lemon. [*Exeunt mob.*]

Tony. [*Alone.*—Father-in-law has been calling me whelp and hound this half year. Now, if I pleased, I could be so revenged upon the old grumbletonian. But then I'm afraid—afraid of what? I shall soon be worth 80 fifteen hundred a year, and let him frighten me out of that if he can.

Enter LANDLORD, conducting MARLOW and HASTINGS

Mar. What a tedious uncomfortable day have we had of it! We were told it was but forty miles across the country, and we have come above threescore.

Hast. And all, Marlow, from that unaccountable reserve of yours, that would not let us inquire more frequently on the way.

Mar. I own, Hastings, I am unwilling to lay myself under an obligation to every one I meet, and often stand 90 the chance of an unmannerly answer.

Hast. At present, however, we are not likely to receive any answer.

Tony. No offence, gentlemen. But I'm told you have been inquiring for one Mr. Hardcastle in these parts. Do you know what part of the country you are in?

Hast. Not in the least, sir, but should thank you for information.

Tony. Nor the way you came?

Hast. No, sir; but if you can inform us——

100

Tony. Why, gentlemen, if you know neither the road you are going, nor where you are, nor the road you came,

the first thing I have to inform you is, that—you have lost your way.

Mar. We wanted no ghost to tell us that.

Tony. Pray, gentlemen, may I be so bold so as to ask the place from whence you came?

Mar. That's not necessary towards directing us where we are to go.

110 *Tony.* No offence; but question for question is all fair, you know. Pray, gentlemen, is not this same Hardcastle a cross-grained, old-fashioned, whimsical fellow, with an ugly face, a daughter, and a pretty son?

Hast. We have not seen the gentleman; but he has the family you mention.

Tony. The daughter, a tall, trapesing, trolloping, talkative maypole; the son, a pretty, well-bred, agreeable youth, that everybody is fond of.

Mar. Our information differs in this. The daughter
120 is said to be well-bred and beautiful; the son an awkward booby, reared up and spoiled at his mother's apron-string.

Tony. He-he-hem!—Then, gentlemen, all I have to tell you is, that you won't reach Mr. Hardcastle's house this night, I believe.

Hast. Unfortunate!

Tony. It's a damn'd long, dark, boggy, dirty, dangerous way. Stingo, tell the gentlemen the way to Mr. Hardcastle's! [*Winking upon the LANDLORD.*]—Mr. Hard-
130 castle's, of Quagmire Marsh, you understand me.

Land. Master Hardcastle's! Look-a-daisy, my masters, you're come a deadly deal wrong! When you came to the bottom of the hill, you should have crossed down Squash Lane.

Mar. Cross down Squash Lane !

Land. Then you were to keep straight forward, till you came to four roads.

Mar. Come to where four roads meet ?

Tony. Ay ; but you must be sure to take only one of them. 140

Mar. O, sir, you're facetious.

Tony. Then keeping to the right, you are to go sideways till you come upon Crackskull Common : there you must look sharp for the track of the wheel, and go forward till you come to farmer Murrain's barn. Coming to the farmer's barn, you are to turn to the right, and then to the left, and then to the right about again, till you find out the old mill——

Mar. Zounds, man ! we could as soon find out the longitude ! 150

Hast. What's to be done, Marlow ?

Mar. This house promises but a poor reception ; though perhaps the landlord can accommodate us.

Land. Alack, master, we have but one spare bed in the whole house.

Tony. And to my knowledge, that's taken up by three lodgers already. [*After a pause, in which the rest seem disconcerted.*]*—*I have hit it. Don't you think, Stingo, our landlady could accommodate the gentlemen by the fireside, with——three chairs and a bolster ? 160

Hast. I hate sleeping by the fire-side.

Mar. And I detest your three chairs and a bolster.

Tony. You do, do you ? Then, let me see—what if you go on a mile further, to the Buck's Head ; the old Buck's Head on the hill, one of the best inns in the whole county ?

Hast. O ho ! so we have escaped an adventure for this night, however.

Land. [*Apart to TONY.*—Sure, you ben't sending
170 them to your father's as an inn, be you ?

Tony. Mum, you fool, you. Let *them* find that out.
[*To them.*—You have only to keep on straight forward,
till you come to a large old house by the road side.
You'll see a pair of large horns over the door. That's
the sign. Drive up the yard, and call stoutly about you.

Hast. Sir, we are obliged to you. The servants can't
miss the way ?

Tony. No, no : but I'll tell you, though, the landlord
is rich, and going to leave off business ; so he wants to
180 be thought a gentleman, saving your presence, he ! he !
he ! He'll be for giving you his company ; and, eod,
if you mind him, he'll persuade you that his mother was
an alderman, and his aunt a justice of peace.

Land. A troublesome old blade, to be sure ; but 'a
keeps as good wines and beds as any in the whole country.

Mar. Well, if he supplies us with these, we shall want
no farther connexion. We are to turn to the right, did
you say ?

Tony. No, no ; straight forward. I'll just step my-
190 self, and show you a piece of the way. [*To the LAND-*
LORD.—Mum !

[*Exeunt.*

ACT THE SECOND

SCENE—*An old-fashioned House*

Enter **HARDCASTLE**, *followed by three or four awkward*
SERVANTS

Hard. Well, I hope you are perfect in the table exercise I have been teaching you these three days. You all know your posts and your places, and can show that you have been used to good company, without ever stirring from home.

Omnes. Ay, ay.

Hard. When company comes you are not to pop out and stare, and then run in again, like frightened rabbits in a warren.

Omnes. No, no.

10

Hard. You, Diggory, whom I have taken from the barn, are to make a show at the side-table; and you, Roger, whom I have advanced from the plough, are to place yourself behind my chair. But you're not to stand so, with your hands in your pockets. Take your hands from your pockets, Roger; and from your head, you blockhead, you. See how Diggory carries his hands. They're a little too stiff, indeed, but that's no great matter.

Dig. Ay, mind how I hold them. I learned to hold my hands this way when I was upon drill for the militia. 20
And so being upon drill——

Hard. You must not be so talkative, Diggory. You

must be all attention to the guests. You must hear us talk, and not think of talking ; you must see us drink, and not think of drinking ; you must see us eat, and not think of eating.

Dig. By the laws, your worship, that's perfectly impossible. Whenever Diggory sees yeating going forward, ecod, he's always wishing for a mouthful himself.

30 *Hard.* Blockhead ! Is not a bellyful in the kitchen as good as a bellyful in the parlour ? Stay your stomach with that reflection.

Dig. Ecod, I thank your worship, I'll make a shift to stay my stomach with a slice of cold beef in the pantry.

Hard. Diggory, you are too talkative.—Then, if I happen to say a good thing, or tell a good story at table, you must not all burst out a-laughing, as if you made part of the company.

Dig. Then, ecod, your worship must not tell the story
40 of Ould Grouse in the gun-room : I can't help laughing at that—he ! he ! he !—for the soul of me. We have laughed at that these twenty years—ha ! ha ! ha !

Hard. Ha ! ha ! ha ! The story is a good one. Well, honest Diggory, you may laugh at that—but still remember to be attentive. Suppose one of the company should call for a glass of wine, how will you behave ? A glass of wine, sir, if you please [*to DIGGORY*].—Eh, why don't you move ?

Dig. Ecod, your worship, I never have courage till
50 I see the estates and drinkables brought upo' the table, and then I'm as bauld as a lion.

Hard. What, will nobody move ?

First Serv. I'm not to leave this place.

Second Serv. I'm sure it's no place of mine.

Third Serv. Nor mine, for sartain.

Dig. Wauns, and I'm sure it canna be mine.

Hard. You numskulls! and so while, like your
betters, you are quarrelling for places, the guests must
be starved. O you dunces! I find I must begin all over
again—— But don't I hear a coach drive into the 60
yard? To your posts, you blockheads. I'll go in the
mean time and give my old friend's son a hearty recep-
tion at the gate. [Exit HARDCASTLE.

Dig. By the elevens, my pleace is gone quite out of
my head.

Rog. I know that my pleace is to be everywhere.

First Serv. Where the devil is mine?

Second Serv. My pleace is to be nowhere at all; and
so I'ze go about my business.

[Exeunt SERVANTS, running about as if frightened,
different ways.

*Enter SERVANT with candles, showing in MARLOW and
HASTINGS*

Serv. Welcome, gentlemen, very welcome! This way. 70

Hast. After the disappointments of the day, welcome
once more, Charles, to the comforts of a clean room and
a good fire. Upon my word, a very well-looking house:
antique but creditable.

Mar. The usual fate of a large mansion. Having
first ruined the master by good housekeeping, it at last
comes to levy contributions as an inn.

Hast. As you say, we passengers are to be taxed to
pay all these fineries. I have often seen a good side-
board, or a marble chimney-piece, though not actually 80
put in the bill, inflame a reckoning confoundedly.

Mar. Travellers, George, must pay in all places : the only difference is, that in good inns you pay dearly for luxuries ; in bad inns you are fleeced and starved.

Hast. You have lived very much among them. In truth, I have been often surprised, that you who have seen so much of the world, with your natural good sense, and your many opportunities, could never yet acquire
90 a requisite share of assurance.

Mar. The Englishman's malady. But tell me, George, where could I have learned that assurance you talk of ? My life has been chiefly spent in a college or an inn, in seclusion from that lovely part of the creation that chiefly teach men confidence. I don't know that I was ever familiarly acquainted with a single modest woman—except my mother. But among females of another class, you know——

Hast. Ay, among them you are impudent enough of
100 all conscience.

Mar. They are of *us*, you know.

Hast. But in the company of women of reputation I never saw such an idiot, such a trembler ; you look for all the world as if you wanted an opportunity of stealing out of the room.

Mar. Why, man, that's because I do want to steal out of the room. Faith, I have often formed a resolution to break the ice, and rattle away at any rate. But I don't know how ; a single glance from a pair of fine eyes has
110 totally upset my resolution. An impudent fellow may counterfeit modesty ; but I'll be hanged if a modest man can ever counterfeit impudence.

Hast. If you could but say half the fine things to them

that I have heard you lavish upon the bar-maid of an inn, or even a college bed-maker——

Mar. Why, George, I can't say fine things to them ; they freeze, they petrify me. They may talk of a comet, or a burning mountain, or some such bagatelle ; but, to me, a modest woman, drest out in all her finery, is the most tremendous object of the whole creation. 120

Hast. Ha? ha ! ha ! At this rate, man, how can you ever expect to marry ?

Mar. Never ; unless, as among kings and princes, my bride were to be courted by proxy. If, indeed, like an Eastern bridegroom, one were to be introduced to a wife he never saw before, it might be endured. But to go through all the terrors of a formal courtship, together with the episode of aunts, grandmothers, and cousins, and at last to blurt out the broad staring question of, "Madam, will you marry me ? " No, no, that's a strain 130 much above me, I assure you.

Hast. I pity you. But how do you intend behaving to the lady you are come down to visit at the request of your father ?

Mar. As I behave to all other ladies. Bow very low, answer yes or no to all her demands—But for the rest, I don't think I shall venture to look in her face till I see my father's again.

Hast. I'm surprised that one who is so warm a friend can be so cool a lover. 140

Mar. To be explicit, my dear Hastings, my chief inducement down was to be instrumental in forwarding your happiness, not my own. Miss Neville loves you, the family don't know you ; as my friend you are sure of a reception, and let honour do the rest.

Hast. My dear Marlow! But I'll suppress the emotion. Were I a wretch, meanly seeking to carry off a fortune, you should be the last man in the world I would apply to for assistance. But Miss Neville's person
150 is all I ask, and that is mine, both from her deceased father's consent, and her own inclination.

Mar. Happy man! You have talents and art to captivate any woman. I'm doom'd to adore the sex, and yet to converse with the only part of it I despise. This stammer in my address, and this awkward prepossessing visage of mine, can never permit me to soar above the reach of a milliner's 'prentice, or one of the duchesses of Drury-lane. Pshaw! this fellow here to interrupt us.

Enter HARDCASTLE

160 *Hard.* Gentlemen, once more you are heartily welcome. Which is Mr. Marlow? Sir, you are heartily welcome. It's not my way, you see, to receive my friends with my back to the fire. I like to give them a hearty reception in the old style at my gate. I like to see their horses and trunks taken care of.

Mar. [*Aside.*—He has got our names from the servants already. [*To him.*—We approve of your caution and hospitality, sir. [*To Hastings.*—I have been thinking, George, of changing our travelling dresses in the
170 morning. I am grown confoundedly ashamed of mine.

Hard. I beg, Mr. Marlow, you'll use no ceremony in this house.

Hast. I fancy, George, you're right: the first blow is half the battle. I intend opening the campaign with the white and gold.

Hard. Mr. Marlow—Mr. Hastings—gentlemen—pray

be under no constraint in this house. This is Liberty-hall, gentlemen. You may do just as you please here.

Mar. Yet, George, if we open the campaign too fiercely at first, we may want ammunition before it is 180 over. I think to reserve the embroidery to secure a retreat.

Hard. Your talking of a retreat, Mr. Marlow, puts me in mind of the Duke of Marlborough, when we went to besiege Denain. He first summoned the garrison—

Mar. Don't you think the *ventre d'or* waistcoat will do with the plain brown ?

Hard. He first summoned the garrison, which might consist of about five thousand men—

Hast. I think not : brown and yellow mix but very 190 poorly.

Hard. I say, gentlemen, as I was telling you, he summoned the garrison, which might consist of about five thousand men—

Mar. The girls like finery.

Hard. Which might consist of about five thousand men, well appointed with stores, ammunition, and other implements of war. Now, says the Duke of Marlborough to George Brooks, that stood next to him—you must have heard of George Brooks—I'll pawn my dukedom, 200 says he, but I take that garrison without spilling a drop of blood. So—

Mar. What, my good friend, if you gave us a glass of punch in the mean time ; it would help us to carry on the siege with vigour.

Hard. Punch, sir ! [*Aside.*—This is the most unaccountable kind of modesty I ever met with.

Mar. Yes, sir, punch. A glass of warm punch, after

our journey, will be comfortable. This is Liberty-hall,
210 you know.

Hard. Here's a cup, sir.

Mar. [*Aside.*].—So this fellow, in his Liberty-hall, will only let us have just what he pleases.

Hard. [*Taking the cup.*].—I hope you'll find it to your mind. I have prepared it with my own hands, and I believe you'll own the ingredients are tolerable. Will you be so good as to pledge me, sir? Here, Mr. Marlow, here is to our better acquaintance. [*Drinks.*]

Mar. [*Aside.*].—A very impudent fellow this! but
220 he's a character, and I'll humour him a little. Sir, my service to you. [*Drinks.*]

Hast. [*Aside.*].—I see this fellow wants to give us his company, and forgets that he's an innkeeper, before he has learned to be a gentleman.

Mar. From the excellence of your cup, my old friend, I suppose you have a good deal of business in this part of the country. Warm work, now and then, at elections, I suppose.

Hard. No, sir, I have long given that work over.
230 Since our betters have hit upon the expedient of electing each other, there is no business "for us that sell ale."

Hast. So, then, you have no turn for politics, I find.

Hard. Not in the least. There was a time, indeed, I fretted myself about the mistakes of government, like other people; but finding myself every day grow more angry, and the government growing no better, I left it to mend itself. Since that I no more trouble my head about Hyder Ally, or Ally Cawn, than about Ally Croaker. Sir, my service to you.

240 *Hast.* So that with eating above stairs, and drinking

below, with receiving your friends within, and amusing them without, you lead a good pleasant bustling life of it.

Hard. I do stir about a great deal, that's certain. Half the differences of the parish are adjusted in this very parlour.

Mar. [*After drinking.*—And you have an argument in your cup, old gentleman, better than any in Westminster Hall.

Hard. Ay, young gentleman, that, and a little philosophy. 250

Mar. [*Aside.*—Well, this is the first time I ever heard of an innkeeper's philosophy.

Hast. So then, like an experienced general, you attack them on every quarter. If you find their reason manageable, you attack it with your philosophy; if you find they have no reason, you attack them with this. Here's your health, my philosopher. [*Drinks.*

Hard. Good, very good, thank you; ha! ha! Your generalship puts me in mind of Prince Eugene, when he fought the Turks at the battle of Belgrade. You shall 260 hear.

Mar. Instead of the battle of Belgrade, I believe it's almost time to talk about supper. What has your philosophy got in the house for supper?

Hard. For supper, sir! [*Aside.*—Was ever such a request to a man in his own house?

Mar. Yes, sir, supper, sir; I begin to feel an appetite. I shall make devilish work to-night in the larder, I promise you.

Hard. [*Aside.*—Such a brazen dog sure never my 270 eyes beheld. [*To him.*—Why, really, sir, as for supper I can't well tell. My Dorothy and the cook-maid settle

these things between them. I leave these kind of things entirely to them.

Mar. You do, do you ?

Hard. Entirely. By the bye, I believe they are in actual consultation upon what's for supper this moment in the kitchen.

Mar. Then I beg they'll admit me as one of their
280 privy council. It's a way I have got. When I travel, I always choose to regulate my own supper. Let the cook be called. No offence, I hope, sir.

Hard. O no, sir, none in the least ; yet I don't know how ; our Bridget, the cook-maid, is not very communicative upon these occasions. Should we send for her, she might scold us all out of the house.

Hast. Let's see your list of the larder then. I ask it as a favour. I always match my appetite to my bill of fare.

290 *Mar.* [*To HARDCASTLE, who looks at them with surprise.*—Sir, he's very right, and it's my way too.

Hard. Sir, you have a right to command here. Here, Roger, bring us the bill of fare for to-night's supper : I believe it's drawn out—Your manner, Mr. Hastings, puts me in mind of my uncle, Colonel Wallop. It was a saying of his, that no man was sure of his supper till he had eaten it.

Hast. [*Aside.*—All upon the high rope ! His uncle a colonel ! We shall soon hear of his mother being a
300 justice of the peace. But let's hear the bill of fare.

Mar. [*Perusing.*—What's here ? For the first course ;
for the second course ; for the dessert. The devil, sir, do you think we have brought down a whole Joiners' Company, or the corporation of Bedford, to eat up such

supper ? Two or three little things, clean and comfortable, will do.

Hast. But let's hear it.

Mar. [*Reading.*].—For the first course, at the top, a pig and prune sauce.

Hast. Damn your pig, I say.

310

Mar. And damn your prune sauce, say I.

Hard. And yet, gentlemen, to men that are hungry, pig with prune sauce is very good eating.

Mar. At the bottom, a calf's tongue and brains.

Hast. Let your brains be knocked out, my good sir, I don't like them.

Mar. Or you may clap them on a plate by themselves. I do.

Hard. [*Aside.*].—Their impudence confounds me. [*To them.*].—Gentlemen, you are my guests; make what alterations you please. Is there anything else you wish to retrench or alter, gentlemen ?

Mar. Item, a pork pie, a boiled rabbit and sausages, a Florentine, a shaking pudding, and a dish of tiff—taff—taffety cream.

Hast. Confound your made dishes ; I shall be as much at a loss in this house as at a green and yellow dinner at the French ambassador's table. I'm for plain eating.

Hard. I'm sorry, gentlemen, that I have nothing you like, but if there be anything you have a particular fancy to—

Mar. Why, really, sir, your bill of fare is so exquisite, that any one part of it is full as good as another. Send us what you please. So much for supper. And now to see that our beds are aired, and properly taken care of.

Hard. I entreat you'll leave that to me. You shall not stir a step.

Mar. Leave that to you! I protest, sir, you must
340 excuse me, I always look to these things myself.

Hard. I must insist, sir, you'll make yourself easy on that head.

Mar. You see I'm resolved on it. [*Aside.*—A very troublesome fellow this, as I ever met with.]

Hard. Well, sir, I'm resolved at least to attend you. [*Aside.*—This may be modern modesty, but I never saw anything look so like old-fashioned impudence.

[*Exeunt* MARLOW and HARDCASTLE.]

Hast. [*Alone.*—So I find this fellow's civilities begin to grow troublesome. But who can be angry at those
350 assiduities which are meant to please him? Ha! what do I see? Miss Neville, by all that's happy!

Enter MISS NEVILLE

Miss Nev. My dear Hastings! To what unexpected good fortune, to what accident, am I to ascribe this happy meeting?

Hast. Rather let me ask the same question, as I could never have hoped to meet my dearest Constance at an inn.

Miss Nev. An inn! Sure you mistake: my aunt, my guardian, lives here. What could induce you to think
360 this house an inn?

Hast. My friend, Mr. Marlow, with whom I came down, and I, have been sent here as to an inn, I assure you. A young fellow, whom we accidentally met at a house hard by, directed us hither.

Miss Nev. Certainly it must be one of my hopeful

cousin's tricks, of whom you have heard me talk so often ;
ha ! ha ! ha !

Hast. He whom your aunt intends for you ? he of whom I have such just apprehensions ?

Miss Nev. You have nothing to fear from him, I 370
assure you. You'd adore him, if you knew how heartily he despises me. My aunt knows it too, and has undertaken to court me for him, and actually begins to think she has made a conquest.

Hast. Thou dear dissembler ! You must know, my Constance, I have just seized this happy opportunity of my friend's visit here to get admittance into the family. The horses that carried us down are now fatigued with their journey, but they'll soon be refreshed ; and then, if my dearest girl will trust in her faithful Hastings, we 380 shall soon be landed in France, where even among slaves the laws of marriage are respected.

Miss Nev. I have often told you, that though ready to obey you, I yet should leave my little fortune behind with reluctance. The greatest part of it was left me by my uncle, the India director, and chiefly consists in jewels. I have been for some time persuading my aunt to let me wear them. I fancy I'm very near succeeding. The instant they are put into my possession, you shall find me ready to make them and myself yours. 390

Hast. Perish the baubles ! Your person is all I desire. In the mean time, my friend Marlow must not be let into his mistake. I know the strange reserve of his temper is such, that if abruptly informed of it, he would instantly quit the house before our plan was ripe for execution.

Miss Nev. But how shall we keep him in the decep-

tion ? Miss Hardcastle is just returned from walking ;
what if we still continue to deceive him ?—This, this
400 way— [They confer.

Enter MARLOW

Mar. The assiduities of these good people tease me
beyond bearing. My host seems to think it ill manners
to leave me alone, and so he claps not only himself, but
his old-fashioned wife, on my back. They talk of coming
to sup with us too ; and then, I suppose, we are to
run the gauntlet through all the rest of the family.—
What have we got here ?

Hast. My dear Charles ! Let me congratulate you !—
The most fortunate accident !—Who do you think is just
410 alighted ?

Mar. Cannot guess.

Hast. Our mistresses, boy, Miss Hardcastle and Miss
Neville. Give me leave to introduce Miss Constance
Neville to your acquaintance. Happening to dine in
the neighbourhood, they called on their return to take
fresh horses here. Miss Hardcastle has just stepped into
the next room, and will be back in an instant. Wasn't
it lucky ? eh !

Mar. [*Aside.*—I have been mortified enough of all
420 conscience, and here comes something to complete my
embarrassment.

Hast. Well, but wasn't it the most fortunate thing in
the world ?

Mar. Oh ! yes. Very fortunate—a most joyful
encounter—But our dresses, George, you know are in
disorder—What if we should postpone the happiness till
to-morrow ?—To-morrow at her own house—It will be

every bit as convenient—and rather more respectful—
To-morrow let it be. *[Offering to go.]*

Miss Nev. By no means, sir. Your ceremony will 430
displease her. The disorder of your dress will show the
ardour of your impatience. Besides, she knows you are
in the house, and will permit you to see her.

Mar. O! the devil! how shall I support it? Hem!
hem! Hastings, you must not go. You are to assist
me, you know. I shall be confoundedly ridiculous.
Yet, hang it! I'll take courage. Hem!

Hast. Pshaw, man! it's but the first plunge, and all's
over. She's but a woman, you know.

Mar. And of all women, she that I dread most to 440
encounter.

*Enter MISS HARDCASTLE, as returned from walking;
a bonnet, etc.*

Hast. *[Introducing them.]*—Miss Hardcastle, Mr. Mar-
low. I'm proud of bringing two persons of such merit
together, that only want to know, to esteem each other.

Miss Hard. *[Aside.]*—Now for meeting my modest
gentleman with a demure face, and quite in his own
manner. *[After a pause, in which he appears very uneasy
and disconcerted.]*—I'm glad of your safe arrival, sir.
I'm told you had some accidents by the way.

Mar. Only a few, madam. Yes, we had some. Yes, 450
madam, a good many accidents, but should be sorry—
madam—or rather glad—of any accidents—that are so
agreeably concluded. Hem!

Hast. *[To him.]*—You never spoke better in your
whole life. Keep it up, and I'll insure you the victory.

Miss Hard. I'm afraid you flatter, sir. You that have

seen so much of the finest company, can find little entertainment in an obscure corner of the country.

Mar. [*Gathering courage.*—I have lived, indeed, in
460 the world, madam ; but I have kept very little company. I have been but an observer upon life, madam, while others were enjoying it.

Miss Nev. But that, I am told, is the way to enjoy it at last.

Hast. [*To him.*—Cicero never spoke better. Once more, and you are confirmed in assurance for ever.

Mar. [*To him.*—Hem ! Stand by me, then, and when I'm down, throw in a word or two, to set me up again.

Miss Hard. An observer, like you, upon life were, I
470 fear, disagreeably employed, since you must have had much more to censure than to approve.

Mar. Pardon me, madam. I was always willing to be amused. The folly of most people is rather an object of mirth than uneasiness.

Hast. [*To him.*—Bravo, bravo. Never spoke so well in your whole life. Well, Miss Hardcastle, I see that you and Mr. Marlow are going to be very good company. I believe our being here will but embarrass the interview.

Mar. Not in the least, Mr. Hastings. We like your
480 company of all things. [*To him.*—Zounds ! George, sure you won't go ? how can you leave us ?

Hast. Our presence will but spoil conversation, so we'll retire to the next room. [*To him.*—You don't consider, man, that we are to manage a little *à-tête-à-tête* of our own.

[*Exeunt.*

Miss Hard. [*After a pause.*—But you have not been wholly an observer, I presume, sir : the ladies, I should hope, have employed some part of your addresses.

Mar. [*Relapsing into timidity.*—Pardon me, madam, I—I—I—as yet have studied—only—to—deserve 490 them.

Miss Hard. And that, some say, is the very worst way to obtain them.

Mar. Perhaps so, madam. But I love to converse only with the more grave and sensible part of the sex. But I'm afraid I grow tiresome.

Miss Hard. Not at all, sir ; there is nothing I like so much as grave conversation myself ; I could hear it for ever. Indeed, I have often been surprised how a man of sentiment could ever admire those light airy pleasures, 500 where nothing reaches the heart.

Mar. It's—a disease—of the mind, madam. In the variety of tastes there must be some who, wanting a relish—for—um—a—um.

Miss Hard. I understand you, sir. There must be some, who, wanting a relish for refined pleasures, pretend to despise what they are incapable of tasting.

Mar. My meaning, madam, but infinitely better expressed. And I can't help observing—a—

Miss Hard. [*Aside.*—Who could ever suppose this 510 fellow impudent upon some occasions ? [*To him.*—You were going to observe, sir—

Mar. I was observing, madam—I protest, madam, I forget what I was going to observe.

Miss Hard. [*Aside.*—I vow and so do I. [*To him.*—You were observing, sir, that in this age of hypocrisy—something about hypocrisy, sir.

Mar. Yes, madam. In this age of hypocrisy there are few who upon strict inquiry do not—a—a—a—

Miss Hard. I understand you perfectly, sir.

Mar. [*Aside.*].—Egad! and that's more than I do myself.

Miss Hard. You mean that in this hypocritical age there are few that do not condemn in public what they practise in private, and think they pay every debt to virtue when they praise it.

Mar. True, madam; those who have most virtue in their mouths have least of it in their bosoms. But I'm sure I tire you, madam.

530 *Miss Hard.* Not in the least, sir; there's something so agreeable and spirited in your manner, such life and force—pray, sir, go on.

Mar. Yes, madam. I was saying—that there are some occasions, when a total want of courage, madam, destroys all the—and puts us—upon a—a—a—

Miss Hard. I agree with you entirely; a want of courage upon some occasions assumes the appearance of ignorance, and betrays us when we most want to excel. I beg you'll proceed.

540 *Mar.* Yes, madam. Morally speaking, madam—But I see Miss Neville expecting us in the next room. I would not intrude for the world.

Miss Hard. I protest, sir, I never was more agreeably entertained in all my life. Pray go on.

Mar. Yes, madam, I was—But she beckons us to join her. Madam, shall I do myself the honour to attend you?

Miss Hard. Well, then, I'll follow.

Mar. [*Aside.*].—This pretty smooth dialogue has done
550 for me. [*Exit.*

Miss Hard. [*Alone.*].—Ha! ha! ha! Was there ever such a sober, sentimental interview? I'm certain he

scarce looked in my face the whole time. Yet the fellow, but for his unaccountable bashfulness, is pretty well too. He has good sense, but then so buried in his fears, that it fatigues one more than ignorance. If I could teach him a little confidence, it would be doing somebody that I know of a piece of service. But who is that somebody?—That, faith, is a question I can scarce answer.

[*Exit.*

Enter TONY and MISS NEVILLE, followed by

MRS. HARDCASTLE and HASTINGS

Tony. What do you follow me for, cousin Con? I 560 wonder you're not ashamed to be so very engaging.

Miss Nev. I hope, cousin, one may speak to one's own relations, and not be to blame.

Tony. Ay, but I know what sort of a relation you want to make me, though; but it won't do. I tell you, cousin Con, it won't do; so I beg you'll keep your distance, I want no nearer relationship.

[*She follows, coquetting him to the back scene.*

Mrs. Hard. Well! I vow, Mr. Hastings, you are very entertaining. There's nothing in the world I love to talk of so much as London, and the fashions, though I 570 was never there myself.

Hast. Never there! You amaze me! From your air and manner, I concluded you had been bred all your life either at Ranelagh, St. James's, or Tower Wharf.

Mrs. Hard. O! sir, you're only pleased to say so. We country persons can have no manner at all. I'm in love with the town, and that serves to raise me above some of our neighbouring rustics; but who can have a manner, that has never seen the Pantheon, the Grotto Gardens,

580 the Borough, and such places where the nobility chiefly resort ? All I can do is to enjoy London at second-hand. I take care to know every *tête-à-tête* from the Scandalous Magazine, and have all the fashions, as they come out, in a letter from the two Miss Rickets of Crooked Lane. Pray, how do you like this head, Mr. Hastings ?

Hast. Extremely elegant and *dégagée*, upon my word, madam. Your friseur is a Frenchman, I suppose ?

Mrs. Hard. I protest, I dressed it myself from a print in the Ladies' Memorandum-book for the last year.

590 *Hast.* Indeed ! Such a head in a side-box at the play-house would draw as many gazers as my Lady Mayoress at a City Ball.

Mrs. Hard. I vow, since inoculation began, there is no such thing to be seen as a plain woman ; so one must dress a little particular, or one may escape in the crowd.

Hast. But that can never be your case, madam, in any dress. [*Bowing.*]

Mrs. Hard. Yet, what signifies my dressing when I have such a piece of antiquity by my side as Mr. Hard-
600 castle : all I can say will never argue down a single button from his clothes. I have often wanted him to throw off his great flaxen wig, and where he was bald, to plaster it over, like my Lord Pately, with powder.

Hast. You are right, madam ; for, as among the ladies there are none ugly, so among the men there are none old.

Mrs. Hard. But what do you think his answer was ? Why, with his usual Gothic vivacity, he said I only wanted him to throw off his wig, to convert it into a *tête* for my own wearing.

610 *Hast.* Intolerable ! At your age you may wear what you please, and it must become you.

Mrs. Hard. Pray, Mr. Hastings, what do you take to be the most fashionable age about town ?

Hast. Some time ago, forty was all the mode ; but I'm told the ladies intend to bring up fifty for the ensuing winter.

Mrs. Hard. Seriously. Then I shall be too young for the fashion.

Hast. No lady begins now to put on jewels till she's past forty. For instance, Miss there, in a polite circle, 620 would be considered as a child, as a mere maker of samplers.

Mrs. Hard. And yet Mrs. Niece thinks herself as much a woman, and is as fond of jewels, as the oldest of us all.

Hast. Your niece, is she ? And that young gentleman, a brother of yours, I should presume ?

Mrs. Hard. My son, sir. They are contracted to each other. Observe their little sports. They fall in and out ten times a day, as if they were man and wife already. [To them.]—Well, Tony, child, what soft things are you 630 saying to your cousin Constance this evening ?

Tony. I have been saying no soft things ; but that it's very hard to be followed about so. Ecod ! I've not a place in the house now that's left to myself, but the stable.

Mrs. Hard. Never mind him, Con, my dear. He's in another story behind your back.

Miss Nev. There's something generous in my cousin's manner. He falls out before faces to be forgiven in private.

640

Tony. That's a damned confounded—crack.

Mrs. Hard. Ah ! he's a sly one. Don't you think they are like each other about the mouth, Mr. Hastings ?

The Blenkinsop mouth to a T. They're of a size too. Back to back, my pretties, that Mr. Hastings may see you. Come, Tony.

Tony. You had as good not make me, I tell you.
[Measuring.]

Miss Nev. O lud ! he has almost cracked my head.

630 *Mrs. Hard.* O, the monster ! For shame, Tony. You a man, and behave so !

Tony. If I'm a man, let me have my fortin. Ecod ! I'll not be made a fool of no longer.

Mrs. Hard. Is this, ungrateful boy, all that I'm to get for the pains I have taken in your education ? I that have rooked you in your cradle, and fed that pretty mouth with a spoon ! Did not I work that waistcoat to make you genteel ? Did not I prescribe for you every day, and weep while the receipt was operating ?

660 *Tony.* Ecod ! you had reason to weep, for you have been dosing me ever since I was born. I have gone through every receipt in the Complete Huswife ten times over ; and you have thoughts of coursing me through Quincy next spring. But, ecod ! I tell you, I'll not be made a fool of no longer.

Mrs. Hard. Wasn't it all for your good, viper ? Wasn't it all for your good ?

Tony. I wish you'd let me and my good alone, then. Snubbing this way when I'm in spirits. If I'm to have
670 any good, let it come of itself ; not to keep dinging it, dinging it into one so.

Mrs. Hard. That's false ; I never see you when you're in spirits. No, Tony, you then go to the alehouse or kennel. I'm never to be delighted with your agreeable wild notes, unfeeling monster !

Tony. Eood ! mamma, your own notes are the wildest of the two.

Mrs. Hard. Was ever the like ? But I see he wants to break my heart, I see he does.

Hast. Dear madam, permit me to lecture the young gentleman a little. I'm certain I can persuade him to his duty.

*Mrs. Hard.** Well, I must retire. Come, Constance, my love. You see, Mr. Hastings, the wretchedness of my situation : was ever poor woman so plagued with a dear, sweet, pretty, provoking, undutiful boy ?

[*Exeunt* MRS. HARDCASTLE and MISS NEVILLE.]

Tony. [*Singing.*].—"There was a young man riding by, and fain would have his will. Rang do didlo dee." —Don't mind her. Let her cry. It's the comfort of her heart. I have seen her and sister cry over a book 690 for an hour together ; and they said they liked the book the better the more it made them cry.

Hast. Then you're no friend to the ladies, I find, my pretty young gentleman.

Tony. That's as I find 'um.

Hast. Not to her of your mother's choosing, I dare answer ? And yet she appears to me a pretty well-tempered girl.

Tony. That's because you don't know her as well as I. Eood ! I know every inch about her ; and there's not a 700 more bitter, cantankerous toad in all Christendom.

Hast. [*Aside.*].—Pretty encouragement this for a lover !

Tony. I have seen her since the height of that. She has as many tricks as a hare in a thicket, or a colt the first day's breaking.

Hast. To me she appears sensible and silent.

Tony. Ay, before company. But when she's with her playmate, she's as loud as a hog in a gate.

710 *Hast.* But there is a meek modesty about her that charms me.

Tony. Yes, but curb her never so little, she kicks up, and you're flung in a ditch.

Hast. Well, but you must allow her a little beauty.— Yes, you must allow her some beauty.

Tony. Bandbox! She's all a made-up thing, mun. Ah! could you but see Bet Bouncer of these parts, you might then talk of beauty. Ecod! she has two eyes as black as sloes, and cheeks as broad and red as a pulpit
720 cushion. She'd make two of she.

Hast. Well, what say you to a friend that would take this bitter bargain off your hands?

Tony. Anon.

Hast. Would you thank him that would take Miss Neville, and leave you to happiness and your dear Betsy?

Tony. Ay; but where is there such a friend, for who would take her?

Hast. I am he. If you but assist me, I'll engage to
730 whip her off to France, and you shall never hear more of her.

Tony. Assist you! Ecod! I will, to the last drop of my blood. I'll clap a pair of horses to your chaise that shall trundle you off in a twinkling, and maybe get you a part of her fortin beside, in jewels, that you little dream of.

Hast. My dear 'squire, this looks like a lad of spirit.

Tony. Come along, then, and you shall see more of my spirit before you have done with me. [*Singing.*— 740

“ We are the boys
That fears no noise
Where the thundering cannons roar.”

[*Exeunt.*

ACT THE THIRD

Enter HARDCASTLE, alone

Hard. What could my old friend Sir Charles mean by recommending his son as the modestest young man in town? To me he appears the most impudent piece of brass that ever spoke with a tongue. He has taken possession of the easy chair by the fire-side already. He took off his boots in the parlour, and desired me to see them taken care of. I'm desirous to know how his impudence affects my daughter. She will certainly be shocked at it.

Enter MISS HARDCASTLE, plainly dressed

10 *Hard.* Well, my Kate, I see you have changed your dress, as I bade you; and yet, I believe, there was no great occasion.

Miss Hard. I find such a pleasure, sir, in obeying your commands, that I take care to observe them without ever debating their propriety.

Hard. And yet, Kate, I sometimes give you some cause, particularly when I recommended my modest gentleman to you as a lover to-day.

Miss Hard. You taught me to expect something
20 extraordinary, and I find the original exceeds the description.

Hard. I was never so surprised in my life! He has quite confounded all my faculties!

Miss Hard. I never saw anything like it : and a man of the world too !

Hard. Ay, he learned it all abroad—what a fool was I, to think a young man could learn modesty by traveling. He might as soon learn wit at a masquerade.

Miss Hard. It seems all natural to him.

Hard. A good deal assisted by bad company and a 30 French dancing-master.

Miss Hard. Sure you mistake, papa ! A French dancing-master could never have taught him that timid look—that awkward address—that bashful manner——

Hard. Whose look ? whose manner, child ?

Miss Hard. Mr. Marlow's : his *mauvaise honte*, his timidity, struck me at the first sight.

Hard. Then your first sight deceived you ; for I think him one of the most brazen first sights that ever astonished my senses. 40

Miss Hard. Sure, sir, you rally ! I never saw any one so modest.

Hard. And can you be serious ? I never saw such a bouncing, swaggering puppy since I was born. Bully Dawson was but a fool to him.

Miss Hard. Surprising ! He met me with a respectful bow, a stammering voice, and a look fixed on the ground.

Hard. He met me with a loud voice, a lordly air, and a familiarity that made my blood freeze again.

Miss Hard. He treated me with diffidence and re- 50 spect ; censured the manners of the age ; admired the prudence of girls that never laughed ; tired me with apologies for being tiresome ; then left the room with a bow, and " Madam, I would not for the world detain you."

Hard. He spoke to me as if he knew me all his life before ; asked twenty questions, and never waited for an answer ; interrupted my best remarks with some silly pun ; and when I was in my best story of the Duke of 60 Marlborough and Prince Eugene, he asked if I had not a good hand at making punch. Yes, Kate, he asked your father if he was a maker of punch !

Miss Hard. One of us must certainly be mistaken.

Hard. If he be what he has shown himself, I'm determined he shall never have my consent.

Miss Hard. And if he be the sullen thing I take him, he shall never have mine.

Hard. In one thing then we are agreed—to reject him.

Miss Hard. Yes : but upon conditions. For if you 70 should find him less impudent, and I more presuming—if you find him more respectful, and I more importunate—I don't know—the fellow is well enough for a man—Certainly, we don't meet many such at a horse-race in the country.

Hard. If we should find him so—— But that's impossible. The first appearance has done my business. I'm seldom deceived in that.

Miss Hard. And yet there may be many good qualities under that first appearance.

80 *Hard.* Ay, when a girl finds a fellow's outside to her taste, she then sets about guessing the rest of his furniture. With her, a smooth face stands for good sense, and a genteel figure for every virtue.

Miss Hard. I hope, sir, a conversation begun with a compliment to my good sense won't end with a sneer at my understanding ?

Hard. Pardon me, Kate. But if young Mr. Brazen

can find the art of reconciling contradictions, he may please us both, perhaps.

Miss Hard. And as one of us must be mistaken, what 90 if we go to make further discoveries ?

Hard. Agreed. But depend on't I'm in the right.

Miss Hard. And depend on't I'm not much in the wrong. [*Exeunt.*

Enter TONY, *running in with a casket*

Tony. Ecod ! I have got them. Here they are. My cousin Con's necklaces, bobs and all. My mother shan't cheat the poor souls out of their fortin neither. O ! my genus, is that you ?

Enter HASTINGS

Hast. My dear friend, how have you managed with your mother ? I hope you have amused her with pre- 100 tending love for your cousin, and that you are willing to be reconciled at last ? Our horses will be refreshed in a short time, and we shall soon be ready to set off.

Tony. And here's something to bear your charges by the way [*giving the casket*]; your sweetheart's jewels. Keep them : and hang those, I say, that would rob you of one of them.

Hast. But how have you procured them from your mother ?

Tony. Ask me no questions, and I'll tell you no fibs. 110 I procured them by the rule of thumb. If I had not a key to every drawer in mother's bureau, how could I go to the alehouse so often as I do ? An honest man may rob himself of his own at any time.

Hast. Thousands do it every day. But to be plain with you ; Miss Neville is endeavouring to procure them

from her aunt this very instant. If she succeeds, it will be the most delicate way at least of obtaining them.

Tony. Well, keep them till you know how it will be.
120 But I know how it will be well enough; she'd as soon part with the only sound tooth in her head.

Hast. But I dread the effects of her resentment, when she finds she has lost them.

Tony. Never you mind her resentment; leave *me* to manage that. I don't value her resentment the bounce of a cracker. Zounds! here they are. Morrice! Prance!
[Exit HASTINGS.

Enter MRS. HARDCASTLE and MISS NEVILLE

Mrs. Hard. Indeed, Constance, you amaze me. Such a girl as you want jewels! It will be time enough for jewels, my dear, twenty years hence, when your beauty
130 begins to want repairs.

Miss Nev. But what will repair beauty at forty, will certainly improve it at twenty, madam.

Mrs. Hard. Yours, my dear, can admit of none. That natural blush is beyond a thousand ornaments. Besides, child, jewels are quite out at present. Don't you see half the ladies of our acquaintance, my Lady Kill-daylight, and Mrs. Crump, and the rest of them, carry their jewels to town, and bring nothing but paste and marcasites back.

140 *Miss Nev.* But who knows, madam, but somebody that shall be nameless would like me best with all my little finery about me?

Mrs. Hard. Consult your glass, my dear, and then see if, with such a pair of eyes, you want any better sparklers. What do you think, Tony, my dear? Does

your cousin Con want any jewels in your eyes to set off her beauty?

Tony. That's as thereafter may be.

Miss Nev. My dear aunt, if you knew how it would oblige me.

150

Mrs. Hard. A parcel of old-fashioned rose- and table-cut things. They would make you look like the court of King Solomon at a puppet-show. Besides, I believe, I can't readily come at them. They may be missing, for aught I know to the contrary.

Tony. [*Apart to MRS. HARDOCASTLE.*—Then why don't you tell her so at once, as she's so longing for them? Tell her they're lost. It's the only way to quiet her. Say they're lost, and call me to bear witness.

Mrs. Hard. [*Apart to TONY.*—You know, my dear, 160 I'm only keeping them for you. So if I say they're gone, you'll bear me witness, will you? He! he! he!

Tony. Never fear me. Good! I'll say I saw them taken out with my own eyes.

Miss Nev. I desire them but for a day, madam. Just to be permitted to show them as relics, and then they may be looked up again.

Mrs. Hard. To be plain with you, my dear Constance, if I could find them you should have them. They're missing, I assure you. Lost, for aught I know; but we 170 must have patience wherever they are.

Miss Nev. I'll not believe it! This is but a shallow pretence to deny me. I know they are too valuable to be so slightly kept, and as you are to answer for the loss—

Mrs. Hard. Don't be alarmed, Constance. If they be lost, I must restore an equivalent. But my son knows they are missing, and not to be found.

Tony. That I can bear witness to. They are missing, and not to be found ; I'll take my oath on't.

180 *Mrs. Hard.* You must learn resignation, my dear ; for though we lose our fortune, yet we should not lose our patience. See me, how calm I am.

Miss Nev. Ay, people are generally calm at the misfortunes of others.

Mrs. Hard. Now I wonder a girl of your good sense should waste a thought upon such trumpery. We shall soon find them ; and in the mean time you shall make use of my garnets till your jewels be found.

Miss Nev. I detest garnets.

190 *Mrs. Hard.* The most becoming things in the world to set off a clear complexion. You have often seen how well they look upon me. You *shall* have them. [*Exit.*

Miss Nev. I dislike them of all things. You shan't stir.—Was ever anything so provoking, to mislay my own jewels, and force me to wear her trumpery ?

Tony. Don't be a fool. If she gives you the garnets, take what you can get. The jewels are your own already. I have stolen them out of her bureau, and she does not know it. Fly to your spark, he'll tell you more of the
200 matter. Leave me to manage her.

Miss Nev. My dear cousin !

Tony. Vanish. She's here, and has missed them already. [*Exit* MISS NEVILLE.]—Zounds ! how she fidgets and spits about like a Catherine-wheel.

Enter MRS. HARDCASTLE

Mrs. Hard. Confusion ! thieves ! robbers ! we are cheated, plundered, broke open, undone.

Tony. What's the matter, what's the matter,

mamma? I hope nothing has happened to any of the good family!

Mrs. Hard. We are robbed. My bureau has been broken open, the jewels taken out, and I'm undone.

Tony. Oh! is that all? Ha! ha! ha! By the laws, I never saw it acted better in my life. Ecod! I thought you was ruined in earnest. Ha! ha! ha!

Mrs. Hard. Why, boy, I *am* ruined in earnest. My bureau has been broken open and all taken away.

Tony. Stick to that: ha! ha! ha! stick to that. I'll bear witness, you know; call me to bear witness.

Mrs. Hard. I tell you, Tony, by all that's precious, the jewels are gone, and I shall be ruined for ever. 220

Tony. Sure I know they are gone, and I'm to say so.

Mrs. Hard. My dearest Tony, but hear me. They're gone, I say.

Tony. By the laws, mamma, you make me for to laugh, ha! ha! I know who took them well enough, ha! ha! ha!

Mrs. Hard. Was there ever such a blockhead, that can't tell the difference between jest and earnest? I tell you I'm not in jest, booby.

Tony. That's right, that's right; you must be in a bitter passion, and then nobody will suspect either of us. I'll bear witness that they are gone. 230

Mrs. Hard. Was there ever such a cross-grained brute, that won't hear me? Can you bear witness that you're no better than a fool? Was ever poor woman so beset with fools on one hand, and thieves on the other?

Tony. I can bear witness to that.

Mrs. Hard. Bear witness again, you blockhead, you, and I'll turn you out of the room directly. My poor

240 niece, what will become of her ? Do you laugh, you unfeeling brute, as if you enjoyed my distress ?

Tony. I can bear witness to that.

Mrs. Hard. Do you insult me, monster ? I'll teach you to vex your mother, I will.

Tony. I can bear witness to that.

[*He runs off, she follows him.*]

Enter MISS HARDCASTLE and MAID

Miss Hard. What an unaccountable creature is that brother of mine, to send them to the house as an inn ! Ha ! ha ! I don't wonder at his impudence.

250 *Maid.* But what is more, madam, the young gentleman, as you passed by in your present dress, asked me if you were the bar-maid. He mistook you for the bar-maid, madam.

Miss Hard. Did he ? Then as I live, I'm resolved to keep up the delusion. Tell me, Pimple, how do you like my present dress ? Don't you think I look something like Cherry in the Beaux' Stratagem ?

Maid. It's the dress, madam, that every lady wears in the country, but when she visits or receives company.

260 *Miss Hard.* And are you sure he does not remember my face or person ?

Maid. Certain of it.

Miss Hard. I vow, I thought so ; for, though we spoke for some time together, yet his fears were such, that he never once looked up during the interview. Indeed, if he had, my bonnet would have kept him from seeing me.

Maid. But what do you hope from keeping him in his mistake ?

Miss Hard. In the first place I shall be seen, and that

is no small advantage to a girl who brings her face to market. Then I shall perhaps make an acquaintance, 270 and that's no small victory gained over one who never addresses any but the wildest of her sex. But my chief aim is, to take my gentleman off his guard, and, like an invisible champion of romance, examine the giant's force before I offer to combat.

Maid. But are you sure you can act your part, and disguise your voice so that he may mistake that, as he has already mistaken your person?

Miss Hard. Never fear me. I think I have got the true bar cant—Did your honour call?—Attend the Lion 280 there—Pipes and tobacco for the Angel.—The Lamb has been outrageous this half-hour!

Maid. It will do, madam. But he's here.

[*Exit MAID.*]

Enter MARLOW

Mar. What a bawling in every part of the house! I have scarce a moment's repose. If I go to the best room, there I find my host and his story: if I fly to the gallery, there we have my hostess with her curtesy down to the ground. I have at last got a moment to myself, and now for recollection. [Walks and muses.]

Miss Hard. Did you call, sir? Did your honour call? 290

Mar. [*Musing.*—As for Miss Hardcastle, she's too grave and sentimental for me.

Miss Hard. Did your honour call?

[*She still places herself before him, he turning away.*]

Mar. No, child. [*Musing.*—Besides, from the glimpse I had of her, I think she squints.

Miss Hard. I'm sure, sir, I heard the bell ring.

Mar. No, no. [*Musing.*—I have pleased my father,

however, by coming down, and I'll to-morrow please myself by returning. [*Taking out his tablets and perusing.*]

300 *Miss Hard.* Perhaps the other gentleman called, sir?

Mar. I tell you, no.

Miss Hard. I should be glad to know, sir. We have such a parcel of servants!

Mar. No, no, I tell you. [*Looks full in her face.*]—Yes, child, I think I did call. I wanted—I wanted—I vow, child, you are vastly handsome.

Miss Hard. O la, sir, you'll make one ashamed.

Mar. Never saw a more sprightly malicious eye. Yes, yes, my dear, I did call. Have you got any of your—a—
310 what d'ye call it in the house?

Miss Hard. No, sir, we have been out of that these ten days.

Mar. One may call in this house, I find, to very little purpose. Suppose I should call for a taste, just by way of a trial, of the nectar of your lips; perhaps I might be disappointed in that too?

Miss Hard. Nectar! nectar! That's a liquor there's no call for in these parts. French, I suppose. We sell no French wines here, sir.

320 *Mar.* Of true English growth, I assure you.

Miss Hard. Then it's odd I should not know it. We brew all sorts of wines in this house, and I have lived here these eighteen years.

Mar. Eighteen years! Why, one would think, child, you kept the bar before you were born. How old are you?

Miss Hard. O! sir, I must not tell my age. They say women and music should never be dated.

Mar. To guess at this distance, you can't be much

above forty [*approaching*]. Yet, nearer, I don't think 330 so much [*approaching*]. By coming close to some women they look younger still ; but when we come very close indeed—— [*Attempting to kiss her.*]

Miss Hard. Pray, sir, keep your distance. One would think you wanted to know one's age, as they do horses', by mark of mouth.

Mar. I protest, child, you use me extremely ill. If you keep me at this distance, how is it possible you and I can ever be acquainted ?

Miss Hard. And who wants to be acquainted with 340 you ? I want no such acquaintance, not-I. I'm sure you did not treat Miss Hardcastle, that was here awhile ago, in this obstreperous manner. I'll warrant me, before her you looked dashed, and kept bowing to the ground, and talked, for all the world, as if you was before a justice of peace.

Mar. [*Aside.*—Egad, she has hit it, sure enough !
[*To her.*—In awe of her, child ? Ha ! ha ! ha ! A mere awkward squinting thing ; no, no. I find you don't know me. I laughed and rallied her a little ; but 350 I was unwilling to be too severe. No, I could not be too severe, curse me !

Miss Hard. O ! then, sir, you are a favourite, I find, among the ladies ?

Mar. Yes, my dear, a great favourite. And yet, hang me, I don't see what they find in me to follow. At the Ladies' Club in town I'm called their agreeable Rattle. Rattle, child, is not my real name, but one I'm known by. My name is Solomons ; Mr. Solomons, my dear, at your service. [*Offering to salute her.*]

360

Miss Hard. Hold, sir ; you are introducing me to

your club, not to yourself. And you're so great a favourite there, you say ?

Mar. Yes, my dear. There's Mrs. Mantrap, Lady Betty Blackleg, the Countess of Sligo, Mrs. Langhorns, old Miss Biddy Buckskin, and your humble servant, keep up the spirit of the place.

Miss Hard. Then it's a very merry place, I suppose ?

Mar. Yes, as merry as cards, supper, wine, and old
370 women can make us.

Miss Hard. And their agreeable Rattle. Ha ! ha ! ha !

Mar. [*Aside.*—Egad ! I don't quite like this chit. She looks knowing, methinks. You laugh, child ?

Miss Hard. I can't but laugh, to think what time they all have for minding their work or their family.

Mar. [*Aside.*—All's well ; she don't laugh at me. [*To her.*—Do you ever work, child ?

Miss Hard. Ay, sure. There's not a screen or quilt in the whole house but what can bear witness to that.

380 *Mar.* Odso ! then you must show me your embroidery. I embroider and draw patterns myself a little. If you want a judge of your work, you must apply to me. [*Seizing her hand.*]

Miss Hard. Ay, but the colours do not look well by candlelight. You shall see all in the morning. [*Struggling.*]

Mar. And why not now, my angel ? Such beauty fires beyond the power of resistance.—Pshaw ! the father here ! My old luck : I never nicked seven that I did not throw aces ace three times following. [*Exit MARLOW.*

Enter HARDCASTLE, who stands in surprise

390 *Hard.* So, madam. So, I find *this* is your modest lover. This is your humble admirer, that kept his eyes

fixed on the ground, and only adored at humble distance. Kate, Kate, art thou not ashamed to deceive your father so ?

Miss Hard. Never trust me, dear papa, but he's still the modest man I first took him for ; you'll be convinced of it as well as I.

Hard. By the hand of my body, I believe his impudence is infectious ! Didn't I see him seize your hand ? Didn't I see him haul you about like a milkmaid ? And 400 now you talk of his respect and his modesty, forsooth !

Miss Hard. But if I shortly convince you of his modesty, that he has only the faults that will pass off with time, and the virtues that will improve with age, I hope you'll forgive him.

Hard. The girl would actually make one run mad ! I tell you, I'll not be convinced. I am convinced. He has scarce been three hours in the house, and he has already encroached on all my prerogatives. You may like his impudence, and call it modesty ; but my son- 410 in-law, madam, must have very different qualifications.

Miss Hard. Sir, I ask but this night to convince you.

Hard. You shall not have half the time, for I have thoughts of turning him out this very hour.

Miss Hard. Give me that hour then, and I hope to satisfy you.

Hard. Well, an hour let it be then. But I'll have no trifling with your father. All fair and open, do you mind me.

Miss Hard. I hope, sir, you have ever found that I 420 considered your commands as my pride ; for your kindness is such, that my duty as yet has been inclination.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT THE FOURTH

Enter HASTINGS and MISS NEVIL.

Hast. You surprise me ; Sir Charles Marlow expected here this night ! Where have you had your information ?

Miss Nev. You may depend upon it. I just saw his letter to Mr. Hardcastle, in which he tells him he intends setting out a few hours after his son.

Hast. Then, my Constance, all must be completed before he arrives. He knows me ; and should he find me here, would discover my name, and perhaps my designs, to the rest of the family.

10 *Miss Nev.* The jewels, I hope, are safe ?

Hast. Yes, yes, I have sent them to Marlow, who keeps the keys of our baggage. In the mean time, I'll go to prepare matters for our elopement. I have had the 'squire's promise of a fresh pair of horses ; and if I should not see him again, will write him further directions.

[Exit.

Miss Nev. Well ! success attend you. In the mean time, I'll go and amuse my aunt with the old pretence of a violent passion for my cousin.

[Exit.

Enter MARLOW, followed by a SERVANT

Mar. I wonder what Hastings could mean by sending
20 me so valuable a thing as a casket to keep for him, when he knows the only place I have is the seat of a post-coach

at an inn-door. Have you deposited the casket with the landlady, as I ordered you? Have you put it into her own hands?

Ser. Yes, your honour.

Mar. She said she'd keep it safe, did she?

Ser. Yes, she said she'd keep it safe enough; she asked me how I came by it; and she said she had a great mind to make me give an account of myself.

[*Exit SERVANT.*]

Mar. Ha! ha! ha! They're safe, however. What 30
an unaccountable set of beings have we got amongst! This little bar-maid, though, runs in my head most strangely, and drives out the absurdities of all the rest of the family. She's mine, she must be mine, or I'm greatly mistaken.

Enter HASTINGS

Hast. Bless me! I quite forgot to tell her that I intended to prepare at the bottom of the garden. Marlow here, and in spirits too!

Mar. Give me joy, George. Crown me, shadow me with laurels! Well, George, after all, we modest fellows 40 don't want for success among the women.

Hast. Some women, you mean. But what success has your honour's modesty been crowned with now, that it grows so insolent upon us?

Mar. Didn't you see the tempting, brisk, lovely little thing, that runs about the house with a bunch of keys to its girdle?

Hast. Well, and what then?

Mar. She's mine, you rogue, you. Such fire, such motion, such eyes, such lips; but, egad! she would not 50 let me kiss them though.

Hast. But are you so sure, so very sure of her ?

Mar. Why, man, she talked of showing me her work above stairs, and I am to improve the pattern.

Hast. But how can you, Charles, go about to rob a woman of her honour ?

Mar. Pshaw ! pshaw ! We all know the honour of the bar-maid of an inn. I don't intend to rob her, take my word for it ; there's nothing in this house I shan't
60 honestly pay for.

Hast. I believe the girl has virtue.

Mar. And if she has, I should be the last man in the world that would attempt to corrupt it.

Hast. You have taken care, I hope, of the casket I sent you to lock up ? Is it in safety ?

Mar. Yes, yes. It's safe enough. I have taken care of it. But how could you think the seat of a post-coach at an inn-door a place of safety ? Ah ! numskull ! I have taken better precautions for you than you did for
70 yourself—I have——

Hast. What ?

Mar. I have sent it to the landlady to keep for you.

Hast. To the landlady ?

Mar. The landlady.

Hast. You did ?

Mar. I did. She's to be answerable for its forthcoming, you know.

Hast. Yes, she'll bring it forth with a witness.

Mar. Wasn't I right ? I believe you'll allow that I
80 acted prudently upon this occasion.

Hast. [*Aside.*—He must not see my uneasiness.

Mar. You seem a little disconcerted though, methinks. Sure nothing has happened ?

Hast. No, nothing. Never was in better spirits in all my life. And so you left it with the landlady, who, no doubt, very readily undertook the charge.

Mar. Rather too readily. For she not only kept the casket, but, through her great precaution, was going to keep the messenger too. Ha! ha! ha!

Hast. He! he! he! They're safe, however. 90

Mar. As 2 guinea in a miser's purse.

Hast. [*Aside.*].—So now all hopes of fortune are at an end, and we must set off without it. [*To him.*].—Well, Charles, I'll leave you to your meditations on the pretty bar-maid, and, he! he! he! may you be as successful for yourself, as you have been for me!

[*Exit.*]

Mar. Thank ye, George: I ask no more. Ha! ha! ha!

Enter HARDCASTLE

Hard. I no longer know my own house. It's turned all topsy-turvy. His servants have got drunk already. 100 I'll bear it no longer; and, yet from my respect for his father, I'll be calm. [*To him.*].—Mr. Marlow, your servant. I'm your very humble servant. [*Bowing low.*]

Mar. Sir, your humble servant. [*Aside.*].—What's to be the wonder now?

Hard. I believe, sir, you must be sensible, sir, that no man alive ought to be more welcome than your father's son, sir. I hope you think so?

Mar. I do from my soul, sir. I don't want much entreaty. I generally make my father's son welcome 110 wherever he goes.

Hard. I believe you do, from my soul, sir. But though I say nothing to your own conduct, that of your servants

is insufferable. Their manner of drinking is setting a very bad example in this house, I assure you.

Mar. I protest, my very good sir, that is no fault of mine. If they don't drink as they ought, they are to blame. I ordered them not to spare the cellar, I did, I assure you. [*To the side scene.*—Here, let one of my
120 servants come up. [*To him.*—My positive directions were, that as I did not drink myself, they should make up for my deficiencies below.

Hard. Then they had your orders for what they do ? I'm satisfied !

Mar. They had, I assure you. You shall hear from one of themselves.

Enter SERVANT, drunk

Mar. You, Jeremy ! Come forward, sirrah ! What were my orders ? Were you not told to drink freely, and call for what you thought fit, for the good of the
130 house ?

Hard. [*Aside.*—I begin to lose my patience.

Jer. Please your honour, liberty and Fleet-street for ever ! Though I'm but a servant, I'm as good as another man. I'll drink for no man before supper, sir, damme ! Good liquor will sit upon a good supper, but a good supper will not sit upon——hiccup——on my conscience, sir.

Mar. You see, my old friend, the fellow is as drunk as he can possibly be. I don't know what you'd have more, unless you'd have the poor devil soused in a beer-
140 barrel.

Hard. Zounds ! he'll drive me distracted, if I contain myself any longer. Mr. Marlow—Sir ; I have submitted to your insolence for more than four hours, and

I see no likelihood of its coming to an end. I'm now resolved to be master here, sir ; and I desire that you and your drunken pack may leave my house directly.

Mar. Leave your house !—Sure you jest, my good friend ! What ? when I'm doing what I can to please you.

Hard. I tell you, sir, you don't please me ; so I desire you'll leave my house.

150

Mar. Sure^e you cannot be serious ? At this time o' night, and such a night ? You only mean to banter me.

Hard. I tell you, sir, I'm serious ! and now that my passions are roused, I say this house is mine, sir ; this house is mine, and I command you to leave it directly.

Mar. Ha ! ha ! ha ! A puddle in a storm. I shan't stir a step, I assure you. [*In a serious tone.*]—This your house, fellow ! It's my house. This is my house. Mine, while I choose to stay. What right have you to bid me leave this house, sir ? I never met with such 160 impudence, curse me ; never in my whole life before.

Hard. Nor I, confound me if ever I did. To come to my house, to call for what he likes, to turn me out of my own chair, to insult the family, to order his servants to get drunk, and then to tell me, " This house is mine, sir." By all that's impudent, it makes me laugh. Ha ! ha ! ha ! Pray, sir [*bantering*], as you take the house, what think you of taking the rest of the furniture ? There's a pair of silver candlesticks, and there's a fire-screen, and here's a pair of brazen-nosed bellows ; perhaps you may 170 take a fancy to them ?

Mar. Bring me your bill, sir ; bring me your bill, and let's make no more words about it.

Hard. There are a set of prints, too. What think you of the Rake's Progress, for your own apartment ?

Mar. Bring me your bill, I say ; and I'll leave you and your infernal house directly.

Hard. Then there's a mahogany table that you may see your own face in.

180 *Mar.* My bill, I say.

Hard. I had forgot the great chair for your own particular slumbers, after a hearty meal.

Mar. Zounds ! bring me my bill, I say, and let's hear no more on't.

Hard. Young man, young man, from your father's letter to me, I was taught to expect a well-bred, modest man as a visitor here, but now I find him no better than a coxcomb and a bully ; but he will be down here presently, and shall hear more of it. [Exit.

190 *Mar.* How's this ? Sure I have not mistaken the house. Everything looks like an inn. The servants cry, coming ; the attendance is awkward ; the bar-maid, too, to attend us. But she's here, and will further inform me. Whither so fast, child ? A word with you.

Enter MISS HARDCASTLE

Miss Hard. Let it be short, then. I'm in a hurry. [Aside.]—I believe he begins to find out his mistake. But it's too soon quite to undeceive him.

Mar. Pray, child, answer me one question. What are you, and what may your business in this house be ?

200 *Miss Hard.* A relation of the family, sir.

Mar. What, a poor relation ?

Miss Hard. Yes, sir. A poor relation, appointed to keep the keys, and to see that the guests want nothing in my power to give them.

Mar. That is, you act as the bar-maid of this inn.

Miss Hard. Inn! O law—what brought that in your head? One of the best families in the country keep an inn—Ha! ha! ha! old Mr. Hardcastle's house an inn!

Mar. Mr. Hardcastle's house! Is this Mr. Hard- 210 castle's house, child?

Miss Hard. Ay, sure! Whose else should it be?

Mar. So then, all's out, and I have been damnably imposed on. O, confound my stupid head, I shall be laughed at over the whole town. I shall be stuck up in caricatura in all the print-shops. The *Dullissimo Mac-caroni*. To mistake this house of all others for an inn, and my father's old friend for an innkeeper! What a swaggering puppy must he take me for! What a silly puppy do I find myself! There again, may I be hanged, 220 my dear, but I mistook you for the bar-maid.

Miss Hard. Dear me! dear me! I'm sure there's nothing in my *behaviour* to put me on a level with one of that stamp.

Mar. Nothing, my dear, nothing. But I was in for a list of blunders, and could not help making you a subscriber. My stupidity saw everything the wrong way. I mistook your assiduity for assurance, and your simplicity for allurements. But it's over. This house I no more show *my* face in. 230

Miss Hard. I hope, sir, I have done nothing to disoblige you. I'm sure I should be sorry to affront any gentleman who has been so polite, and said so many civil things to me. I'm sure I should be sorry [*pretending to cry*] if he left the family upon my account. I'm sure I should be sorry if people said anything amiss, since I have no fortune but my character.

Mar. [*Aside.*].—By heaven! she weeps. This is the first mark of tenderness I ever had from a modest
240 woman, and it touches me. [*To her.*].—Excuse me, my lovely girl; you are the only part of the family I leave with reluctance. But to be plain with you, the difference of our birth, fortune, and education, makes an honourable connexion impossible; and I can never harbour a thought of seducing simplicity that trusted in my honour, of bringing ruin upon one whose only fault was being too lovely.

Miss Hard. [*Aside.*].—Generous man! I now begin to admire him. [*To him.*].—But I am sure my family is
250 as good as Miss Hardcastle's; and though I'm poor, that's no great misfortune to a contented mind; and, until this moment, I never thought that it was bad to want a fortune.

Mar. And why now, my pretty simplicity?

Miss Hard. Because it puts me at a distance from one that, if I had a thousand pounds, I would give it all to.

Mar. [*Aside.*].—This simplicity bewitches me, so that if I stay, I'm undone. I must make one bold effort, and leave her. [*To her.*].—Your partiality in my favour, my
260 dear, touches me most sensibly: and were I to live for myself alone, I could easily fix my choice. But I owe too much to the opinion of the world, too much to the authority of a father; so that—I can scarcely speak it—it affects me. Farewell. [*Exit.*]

Miss Hard. I never knew half his merit till now. He shall not go, if I have power or art to detain him. I'll still preserve the character in which I *stooped to conquer*; but will undeceive my papa, who perhaps may laugh him out of his resolution. [*Exit.*]

Enter TONY and MISS NEVILLE

Tony. Ay, you may steal for yourselves the next time. 270
I have done my duty. She has got the jewels again,
that's a sure thing ; but she believes it was all a mistake
of the servants.

Miss Nev. But, my dear cousin, sure you won't forsake us in this distress ? If she in the least suspects that I am going off, I shall certainly be locked up, or sent to my aunt Pedigree's, which is ten times worse.

Tony. To be sure, aunts of all kinds are damned bad things. But what can I do ? I have got you a pair of horses that will fly like Whistle-jacket ; and I'm sure 280
you can't say but I have courted you nicely before her face. Here she comes, we must court a bit or two more, for fear she should suspect us.

[They retire and seem to fondle.]

Enter MRS. HARDCASTLE

Mrs. Hard. Well, I was greatly fluttered, to be sure. But my son tells me it was all a mistake of the servants. I shan't be easy, however, till they are fairly married, and then let her keep her own fortune. But what do I see ? fondling together, as I'm alive. I never saw Tony so sprightly before. Ah ! have I caught you, my pretty doves ? What, billing, exchanging stolen glances and 290
broken murmurs ? Ah !

Tony. As for murmurs, mother, we grumble a little now and then, to be sure. But there's no love lost between us.

Mrs. Hard. A mere sprinkling, Tony, upon the flame, only to make it burn brighter.

Miss Nev. Cousin Tony, promises to give us more of

his company at home. Indeed, he shan't leave us any more. It won't leave us, cousin Tony, will it?

- 300 *Tony.* O! it's a pretty creature. No, I'd sooner leave my horse in a pound, than leave you when you smile upon one so. Your laugh makes you so becoming.

Miss Nev. Agreeable cousin! Who can help admiring that natural humour, that pleasant, broad, red, thoughtless [*patting his cheek*]*—ah! it's a bold face.*

Mrs. Hard. Pretty innocence!

Tony. I'm sure I always loved cousin Con's hazel eyes, and her pretty long fingers, that she twists this way and that over the haspicholls, like a parcel of bobbins.

- 310 *Mrs. Hard.* Ah! he would charm the bird from the tree. I was never so happy before. My boy takes after his father, poor Mr. Lumpkin, exactly. The jewels, my dear Con, shall be yours incontinently. You shall have them. Isn't he a sweet boy, my dear? You shall be married to-morrow, and we'll put off the rest of his education, like Dr. Drowsy's sermons, to a fitter opportunity.

Enter DIGGORY

Dig. Where's the 'squire? I have got a letter for your worship.

- 320 *Tony.* Give it to my mamma. She reads all my letters first.

Dig. I had orders to deliver it into your own hands.

Tony. Who does it come from?

Dig. Your worship mun ask that o' the letter itself.

Tony. I could wish to know though [*turning the letter and gazing on it*].

Miss Nev. [*Aside.*]*—Undone! undone! A letter to him from Hastings. I know the hand. If my aunt sees*

it, we are ruined for ever. I'll keep her employed a little if I can. [*To MRS. HARDCASTLE.*—But I have not told 350 you, madam, of my cousin's smart answer just now to Mr. Marlow. We so laughed.—You must know, madam. —This way a little, for he must not hear us.

[*They confer.*

Tony. [*Still gazing.*—A damned cramp piece of penmanship, as I ever saw in my life. I can read your print hand very well. But here are such handles, and shanks, and dashes, that one can scarce tell the head from the tail.—“To Anthony Lumpkin, Esquire.” It's very odd, I can read the outside of my letters, where my own name is, well enough; but when I come to open it, it's 340 all—buzz. That's hard, very hard; for the inside of the letter is always the cream of the correspondence.

Mrs. Hard. Ha! ha! ha! Very well, very well. And so my son was too hard for the philosopher.

Miss Nev. Yes, madam; but you must hear the rest, madam. A little more this way, or he may hear us. You'll hear how he puzzled him again.

Mrs. Hard. He seems strangely puzzled now himself, methinks.

Tony. [*Still gazing.*—A damned up and down hand, 350 as if it was disguised in liquor. [*Reading.*—Dear sir,—ay, that's that. Then there's an M, and a T, and an S, but whether the next be an izzard, or an R, confound me, I cannot tell.

Mrs. Hard. What's that, my dear? Can I give you any assistance?

Miss Nev. Pray, aunt, let me read it. Nobody reads a cramp hand better than I. [*Twitching the letter from him.*—Do you know who it is from?

360 *Tony.* Can't tell, except from Dick Ginger, the feeder.

Miss Nev. Ay, so it is. [*Pretending to read.*—"Dear 'Squire, hoping that you're in health, as I am at this present. The gentlemen of the Shake-bag club has cut the gentlemen of Goose-green quite out of feather. The odds—um—odd battle—um—long fighting—um—" here, here, it's all about cocks and fighting; it's of no consequence; here, put it up, put it up. [*Thrusting the crumpled letter upon him.*]

Tony. But I tell you, miss, it's of all the consequence
370 in the world. I would not lose the rest of it for a guinea. Here, mother, do you make it out. Of no consequence! [*Giving Mrs. Hardcastle the letter.*]

Mrs. Hard. How's this? [*Reads.*—"Dear 'Squire, I'm now waiting for Miss Neville, with a post-chaise and pair, at the bottom of the garden, but I find my horses yet unable to perform the journey. I expect you'll assist us with a pair of fresh horses, as you promised. Dispatch is necessary, as the *hag* (ay, the hag), your mother, will otherwise suspect us! Yours, Hastings." Grant me patience. I shall run distracted! My rage chokes me.

380 *Miss Nev.* I hope, madam, you'll suspend your resentment for a few moments, and not impute to me any impertinence, or sinister design, that belongs to another.

Mrs. Hard. [*Curtseying very low.*—Fine spoken, madam, you are most miraculously polite and engaging, and quite the very pink of courtesy and circumspection, madam. [*Changing her tone.*] And you, you great ill-fashioned oaf, with scarce sense enough to keep your mouth shut: were you, too, joined against me? But I'll defeat all your plots in a moment. As for you,
390 madam, since you have got a pair of fresh horses ready,

it would be cruel to disappoint them. So, if you please, instead of running away with your spark, prepare, this very moment, to run off with *me*. Your old aunt Pedigree will keep you secure, I'll warrant me. You too, sir, may mount your horse, and guard us upon the way. Here, Thomas, Roger, Diggory ! I'll show you, that I wish you better than you do yourselves. [*Exit.*]

Miss Nev. So now I'm completely ruined.

Tony. Ay, that's a sure thing.

Miss Nev. What better could be expected from being 400 connected with such a stupid fool,—and after all the nods and signs I made him ?

Tony. By the laws, Miss, it was your own cleverness, and not my stupidity, that did your business. You were so nice and so busy with your Shake-bags and Goose-greens, that I thought you could never be making believe.

Enter HASTINGS

Hast. So, sir, I find by my servant, that you have shown my letter, and betrayed us. Was this well done, young gentleman ?

Tony. Here's another. Ask Miss there, who betrayed 410 you. Ecod ! it was her doing, not mine.

Enter MARLOW

Mar. So I have been finely used here among you. Rendered contemptible, driven into ill manners, despised, insulted, laughed at.

Tony. Here's another. We shall have old Bedlam broke loose presently.

Miss Nev. And there, sir, is the gentleman to whom we all owe every obligation.

Mar. What can I say to him, a mere boy, an idiot,
420 whose ignorance and age are a protection ?

Hast. A poor contemptible booby, that would but disgrace correction.

Miss Nev. Yet with cunning and malice enough to make himself merry with all our embarrassments.

Hast. An insensible cub.

Mar. Replete with tricks and mischief. *

Tony. Baw ! damme, but I'll fight you both, one after the other—with baskets.

Mar. As for him, he's below resentment. But
430 your conduct, Mr. Hastings, requires an explanation. You knew of my mistakes, yet would not undeceive me.

Hast. Tortured as I am with my own disappointments, is this a time for explanations ? It is not friendly, Mr. Marlow.

Mar. But, sir——

Miss Nev. Mr. Marlow, we never kept on your mistake till it was too late to undeceive you.

Enter SERVANT

Serv. My mistress desires you'll get ready immediately.
440 madam. The horses are putting to. Your hat and things are in the next room. We are to go thirty miles before morning. *[Exit SERVANT.]*

Miss Nev. Well, well : I'll come presently.

Mar. *[To HASTINGS.]*—Was it well done, sir, to assist in rendering me ridiculous ? To hang me out for the scorn of all my acquaintance ? Depend upon it, sir, I shall expect an explanation.

Hast. Was it well done, sir, if you're upon that subject,

to deliver what I entrusted to yourself, to the care of another, sir ?

450

Miss Nev. Mr. Hastings ! Mr. Marlow ! Why will you increase my distress by this groundless dispute ? I implore, I entreat you——

Enter SERVANT

Serv. Your cloak, madam. My mistress is impatient.

[Exit SERVANT.]

Miss Nev. I come. Pray be pacified. If I leave you thus, I shall die with apprehension.

Enter SERVANT

Serv. Your fan, muff, and gloves, madam. The horses are waiting.

Miss Nev. O, Mr. Marlow ! if you knew what a scene of constraint and ill-nature lies before me, I'm sure it 460 would convert your resentment into pity.

Mar. I am so distracted with a variety of passions, that I don't know what I do. Forgive me, madam. George, forgive me. You know my hasty temper, and should not exasperate it.

Hast. The torture of my situation is my only excuse.

Miss Nev. Well, my dear Hastings, if you have that esteem for me that I think, that I am sure you have, your constancy for three years will but increase the happiness 470 of our future connexion. If——

Mrs. Hard. *[Within.]*—Miss Neville. Constance, why, Constance, I say.

Miss Nev. I'm coming. Well, constancy, remember, constancy is the word. *[Exit.]*

Hast. My heart ! how can I support this ? To be so near happiness, and such happiness !

Mar. [To TONY.]—You see now, young gentleman, the effects of your folly. What might be amusement to
480 you, is here disappointment, and even distress.

Tony. [From a reverie.]—Ecod ! I have hit it. It's here. Your hands. Yours and yours, my poor Sulky ! —My boots there, ho !—Meet me two hours hence at the bottom of the garden ; and if you don't find Tony Lumpkin a more good-natured fellow than you thought for, I'll give you leave to take my best horse, and Bet Bouncer into the bargain. Come along. My boots, ho !

[*Exeunt.*

ACT THE FIFTH

(SCENE continued)

Enter HASTINGS and SERVANT

Hast. You saw the old lady and Miss Neville drive off, you say ?

Serv. Yes, your honour. They went off in a post-coach, and the young 'squire went on horseback. They're thirty miles off by this time.

Hast. Then all my hopes are over.

Serv. Yes, sir. Old Sir Charles has arrived. He and the old gentleman of the house have been laughing at Mr. Marlow's mistake this half-hour. They are coming this way. 10

Hast. Then I must not be seen. So now to my fruitless appointment at the bottom of the garden. This is about the time. *[Exit.]*

Enter SIR CHARLES and HARDCASTLE

Hard. Ha ! ha ! ha ! The peremptory tone in which he sent forth his sublime commands !

Sir Cha. And the reserve with which I suppose he treated all your advances.

Hard. And yet he might have seen something in me above a common innkeeper, too.

Sir Cha. Yes, Dick, but he mistook you for an un- 20
common innkeeper, ha ! ha ! ha !

Hard. Well, I'm in too good spirits to think of anything but joy. Yes, my dear friend, this union of our families will make our personal friendships hereditary; and though my daughter's fortune is but small——

Sir Cha. Why, Dick, will you talk of fortune to me? My son is possessed of more than a competence already, and can want nothing but a good and virtuous girl to share his happiness and increase it. If they like each
30 other, as you say they do——

Hard. If, man! I tell you they *do* like each other. My daughter as good as told me so.

Sir Cha. But girls are apt to flatter themselves, you know.

Hard. I saw him grasp her hand in the warmest manner myself; and here he comes to put you out of your *ifs*, I warrant him.

Enter MARLOW

Mar. I come, sir, once more, to ask pardon for my strange conduct. I can scarce reflect on my insolence
40 without confusion.

Hard. Tut, boy, a trifle! You take it too gravely. An hour or two's laughing with my daughter will set all to rights again. She'll never like you the worse for it.

Mar. Sir, I shall be always proud of her approbation.

Hard. Approbation is but a cold word, Mr. Marlow; if I am not deceived, you have something more than approbation thereabouts. You take me?

Mar. Really, sir, I have not that happiness.

Hard. Come, boy, I'm an old fellow, and know what's
50 what as well as you that are younger. I know what has passed between you; but mum.

Mar. Sure, sir, nothing has passed between us but the most profound respect on my side, and the most distant reserve on hers. You don't think, sir, that my impudence has been passed upon all the rest of the family.

Hard. Impudence! No, I don't say that—not quite impudence—though girls like to be played with, and rumpled a little too, sometimes. But she has told no tales, I assure you. 60

Mar. I never gave her the slightest cause.

Hard. Well, well, I like modesty in its place well enough. But this is over-acting, young gentleman. You may be open. Your father and I will like you all the better for it.

Mar. May I die, sir, if I ever——

Hard. I tell you, she don't dislike you; and as I'm sure you like her——

Mar. Dear sir—I protest, sir——

Hard. I see no reason why you should not be joined 70 as fast as the parson can tie you.

Mar. But hear me, sir——

Hard. Your father approves the match, I admire it; every moment's delay will be doing mischief. So——

Mar. But why won't you hear me? By all that's just and true, I never gave Miss Hardcastle the slightest mark of my attachment, or even the most distant hint to suspect me of affection. We had but one interview, and that was formal, modest, and uninteresting.

Hard. [*Aside.*].—This fellow's formal modest impudence is beyond bearing.

Sir Cha. And you never grasped her hand, or made any protestations?

Mar. As Heaven is my witness, I came down in obedience to your commands. I saw the lady without emotion, and parted without reluctance. I hope you'll exact no farther proofs of my duty, nor prevent me from leaving a house in which I suffer so many mortifications.

[*Exit.*

Sir Cha. I'm astonished at the air of sincerity with
90 which he parted.

Hard. And I'm astonished at the deliberate intrepidity of his assurance.

Sir Cha. I dare pledge my life and honour upon his truth.

Hard. Here comes my daughter, and I would stake my happiness upon her veracity.

Enter MISS HARDCASTLE

Hard. Kate, come hither, child. Answer us sincerely and without reserve : has Mr. Marlow made you any professions of love and affection ?

100 *Miss Hard.* The question is very abrupt, sir. But since you require unreserved sincerity, I think he has.

Hard. [To SIR CHARLES.]—You see.

Sir Cha. And pray, madam, have you and my son had more than one interview ?

Miss Hard. Yes, sir, several.

Hard. [To SIR CHARLES.]—You see.

Sir Cha. But did he profess any attachment ?

Miss Hard. A lasting one.

Sir Cha. Did he talk of love ?

110 *Miss Hard.* Much, sir.

Sir Cha. Amazing ! And all this formally ?

Miss Hard. Formally.

Hard. Now, my friend, I hope you are satisfied.

Sir Cha. And how did he behave, madam ?

Miss Hard. As most professed admirers do : said some civil things of my face, talked much of his want of merit, and the greatness of mine ; mentioned his heart, gave a short tragedy speech, and ended with pretended rapture.

Sir Cha. Now I'm perfectly convinced, indeed. I 120 know his conversation among women to be modest and submissive : this forward canting ranting manner by no means describes him ; and, I am confident, he never sat for the picture.

Miss Hard. Then, what, sir, if I should convince you to your face of my sincerity ? If you and my papa, in about half an hour, will place yourselves behind that screen, you shall hear him declare his passion to me in person.

Sir Cha. Agreed. And if I find him what you de- 130 scribe, all my happiness in him must have an end. [*Erit.*

Miss Hard. And if you don't find him what I describe—I fear my happiness must never have a beginning.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE changes to the back of the Garden

Enter HASTINGS

Hast. What an idiot am I, to wait here for a fellow who probably takes a delight in mortifying me. He never intended to be punctual, and I'll wait no longer. What do I see ? It is he ! and perhaps with news of my Constance.

Enter TONY, booted and spattered

st. My honest 'squire ! I now find you a man of word. This looks like friendship.

my. Ay, I'm your friend, and the best friend you in the world, if you knew but all. This riding by, by the bye, is cursedly tiresome. It has shook me more than the basket of a stage-coach.

st. But how ? Where did you leave your fellow-travellers ? Are they in safety ? Are they housed ?

my. Five and twenty miles in two hours and a half of such bad driving. The poor beasts have smoked more than a rabbit me, but I'd rather ride forty miles after a horse than ten with such varment.

st. Well, but where have you left the ladies ? I ask with impatience.

my. Left them ! Why where should I leave them where I found them ?

st. This is a riddle.

my. Riddle me this, then. What's that goes round the house, and round the house, and never touches the house ?

st. I'm still astray.

my. Why, that's it, mon. I have led them astray. I know, there's not a pond or a slough within five miles of the place but they can tell the taste of.

st. Ha ! ha ! ha ! I understand : you took them round, while they supposed themselves going forward, and so you have at last brought them home again.

my. You shall hear. I first took them down the other-bed Lane, where we stuck fast in the mud. I then rattled them crack over the stones of Up-and-down

Hill. I then introduced them to the gibbet on Heavy-tree Heath ; and from that, with a circumbendibus, I fairly lodged them in the horse-pond at the bottom of the garden.

Hast. But no accident, I hope ?

40

Tony. No, no. Only mother is confoundedly frightened. She thinks herself forty miles off. She's sick of the journey, and the cattle can scarce crawl. So if your own horses be ready, you may whip off with cousin, and I'll be bound that no soul here can budge a foot to follow you.

Hast. My dear friend, how can I be grateful ?

Tony. Ay, now it's dear friend, noble 'squire. Just now, it was all idiot, cub, and run me through the guts. Damn *your* way of fighting, I say. After we take a knock 60 in this part of the country, we kiss and be friends. But if you had run me through the guts, then I should be dead, and you might go kiss the hangman.

Hast. The rebuke is just. But I must hasten to relieve Miss Neville : if you keep the old lady employed, I promise to take care of the young one.

[*Exit* HASTINGS.]

Tony. Never fear me. Here she comes. Vanish. She's got from the pond, and draggled up to the waist like a mermaid.

Enter MRS. HARDCASTLE

Mrs. Hard. Oh, Tony, I'm killed ! Shook ! Battered 60 to death. I shall never survive it. That last jolt, that laid us against the quickset hedge, has done my business.

Tony. Alack, mamma, it was all your own fault. You

would be for running away by night, without knowing one inch of the way.

Mrs. Hard. I wish we were at home again. I never met so many accidents in so short a journey. Drenched in the mud, overturned in a ditch, stuck fast in a slough, 70 jolted to a jelly, and at last to lose our way. Whereabouts do you think we are, Tony ?

Tony. By my guess we should come upon Crackskull Common, about forty miles from home.

Mrs. Hard. O lud ! O lud ! The most notorious spot in all the country. We only want a robbery to make a complete night on't.

Tony. Don't be afraid, mamma ; don't be afraid. Two of the five that kept here are hanged, and the other three may not find us. Don't be afraid.—Is that a man 80 that's galloping behind us ? No, it's only a tree.—Don't be afraid.

Mrs. Hard. The fright will certainly kill me.

Tony. Do you see anything like a black hat moving behind the thicket ?

Mrs. Hard. Oh, death !

Tony. No ; it's only a cow. Don't be afraid, mamma ; don't be afraid.

Mrs. Hard. As I'm alive, Tony, I see a man coming towards us. Ah ! I'm sure on't. If he perceives us, we 90 are undone.

Tony. [*Aside.*—Father-in-law, by all that's unlucky, come to take one of his night walks. [*To her.*—Ah, it's a highwayman with pistols as long as my arm. A damned ill-looking fellow.

Mrs. Hard. Good Heaven defend us ! He approaches.

Tony. Do you hide yourself in that thicket, and

leave me to manage him. If there be any danger, I'll cough, and cry hem. When I cough, be sure to keep close.

[*MRS. HARDCASTLE hides behind a tree in the back scene.*]

Enter HARDCASTLE

Hard. I'm mistaken, or I heard voices of people in 100 want of help. Oh, Tony! is that you? I did not expect you so soon back. Are your mother and her charge in safety?

Tony. Very safe, sir, at my aunt Pedigree's. Hem.

Mrs. Hard. [*From behind.*—Ah, death! I find there's danger.

Hard. Forty miles in three hours; sure that's too much, my youngster.

Tony. Stout horses and willing minds make short journeys, as they say. Hem. 110

Mrs. Hard. [*From behind.*—Sure he'll do the dear boy no harm.

Hard. But I heard a voice here; I should be glad to know from whence it came.

Tony. It was I, sir, talking to myself, sir. I was saying that forty miles in four hours was very good going. Hem. As to be sure it was. Hem. I have got a sort of cold by being out in the air. We'll go in, if you please. Hem.

Hard. But if you talked to yourself you did not 120 answer yourself. I'm certain I heard two voices, and am resolved [*raising his voice*] to find the other out.

Mrs. Hard. [*From behind.*—Oh! he's coming to find me out. Oh!

Tony. What need you go, sir, if I tell you? Hem.

I'll lay down my life for the truth—hem—I'll tell you all, sir.

[*Detaining him.*]

Hard. I tell you I will not be detained. I insist on seeing. It's in vain to expect I'll believe you.

130 *Mrs. Hard.* [*Running forward from behind.*—O lud ! he'll murder my poor boy, my darling ! Here, good gentleman, whet your rage upon me. Take my money, my life, but spare that young gentleman ; spare my child, if you have any mercy.

Hard. My wife, as I'm a Christian. From whence can she come ? or what does she mean ?

Mrs. Hard. [*Kneeling.*—Take compassion on us, good Mr. Highwayman. Take our money, our watches, all we have, but spare our lives. We will never bring
140 you to justice ; indeed we won't, good Mr. Highwayman.

Hard. I believe the woman's out of her senses. What, Dorothy, don't you know *me* ?

Mrs. Hard. Mr. Hardcastle, as I'm alive ! My fears blinded me. But who, my dear, could have expected to meet you here, in this frightful place, so far from home ? What has brought you to follow us ?

Hard. Sure, Dorothy, you have not lost your wits ? So far from home, when you are within forty yards of
150 your own door ! [*To him.*—This is one of your old tricks, you graceless rogue, you. [*To her.*—Don't you know the gate, and the mulberry-tree ; and don't you remember the horse-pond, my dear ?

Mrs. Hard. Yes, I shall remember the horse-pond as long as I live ; I have caught my death in it. [*To Tony.*—And is it to you, you graceless varlet, I owe all this ? I'll teach you to abuse your mother, I will.

Tony. Ecod, mother, all the parish says you have spoiled me, and so you may take the fruits on't.

Mrs. Hard. I'll spoil you, I will.

160

[*Follows him off the stage. Exit.*]

Hard. There's morality, however, in his reply. [*Exit.*]

Enter HASTINGS and MISS NEVILLE

Hast. My^d dear Constance, why will you deliberate thus? If we delay a moment, all is lost for ever. Pluck up a little resolution, and we shall soon be out of the reach of her malignity.

Miss Nev. I find it impossible. My spirits are so sunk with the agitations I have suffered, that I am unable to face any new danger. Two or three years' patience will at last crown us with happiness.

Hast. Such a tedious delay is worse than incon- 170
stancy. Let us fly, my charmer. Let us date our happiness from this very moment. Perish fortune! Love and content will increase what we possess beyond a monarch's revenue. Let me prevail!

Miss Nev. No, Mr. Hastings, no. Prudence once more comes to my relief, and I will obey its dictates. In the moment of passion fortune may be despised, but it ever produces a lasting repentance. I'm resolved to apply to Mr. Hardcastle's compassion and justice for redress. 180

Hast. But though he had the will, he has not the power to relieve you.

Miss Nev. But he has influence, and upon that I am resolved to rely.

Hast. I have no hopes. But since you persist, I must reluctantly obey you. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE changes

Enter SIR CHARLES and MISS HARDCASTLE

Sir Cha. What a situation am I in ! If what you say appears, I shall then find a guilty son. If what he says be true, I shall then lose one that, of all others, I most wished for a daughter.

Miss Hard. I am proud of your approbation, and to show I merit it, if you place yourselves as I directed, you shall hear his explicit declaration. But he comes.

Sir Cha. I'll to your father, and keep him to the appointment. [*Exit* SIR CHARLES.

Enter MARLOW

10 *Mar.* Though prepared for setting out, I come once more to take leave ; nor did I, till this moment, know the pain I feel in the separation.

Miss Hard. [*In her own natural manner.*—I believe these sufferings cannot be very great, sir, which you can so easily remove. A day or two longer, perhaps, might lessen your uneasiness, by showing the little value of what you now think proper to regret.

Mar. [*Aside.*—This girl every moment improves upon me. [*To her.*—It must not be, madam. I have
20 already trifled too long with my heart. My very pride begins to submit to my passion. The disparity of education and fortune, the anger of a parent, and the contempt of my equals, begin to lose their weight ; and nothing can restore me to myself but this painful effort of resolution.

Miss Hard. Then go, sir : I'll urge nothing more to detain you. Though my family be as good as hers you

came down to visit, and my education, I hope, not inferior, what are these advantages without equal affluence? I must remain contented with the slight 30 approbation of imputed merit; I must have only the mockery of your addresses, while all your serious aims are fixed on fortune.

Enter HARDCASTLE and SIR CHARLES from behind

Sir Cha. Here, behind this screen.

Hard. Ay, ay; make no noise. I'll engage my Kate covers him with confusion at last.

Mar. By heavens, madam! fortune was ever my smallest consideration. Your beauty at first caught my eye; for who could see that without emotion? But every moment that I converse with you steals in some 40 new grace, heightens the picture, and gives it stronger expression. What at first seemed rustic plainness, now appears refined simplicity. What seemed forward assurance, now strikes me as the result of courageous innocence and conscious virtue.

Sir Cha. What can it mean? He amazes me!

Hard. I told you how it would be. Hush!

Mar. I am now determined to stay, madam; and I have too good an opinion of my father's discernment, when he sees you, to doubt his approbation. 50

Miss Hard. No, Mr. Marlow, I will not, cannot detain you. Do you think I could suffer a connexion in which there is the smallest room for repentance? Do you think I would take the mean advantage of a transient passion, to load you with confusion? Do you think I could ever relish that happiness which was acquired by lessening yours?

Mar. By all that's good, I can have no happiness but what's in your power to grant me ! Nor shall I ever feel
60 repentance but in not having seen your merits before. I will stay even contrary to your wishes ; and though you should persist to shun me, I will make my respectful assiduities atone for the levity of my past conduct.

Miss Hard. Sir, I must entreat you'll desist. As our acquaintance began, so let it end, in indifference. I might have given an hour or two to levity ; but seriously, Mr. Marlow, do you think I could ever submit to a connexion where I must appear mercenary, and you imprudent ? Do you think I could ever catch at the
70 confident addresses of a secure admirer ?

Mar. [*Kneeling.*].—Does this look like security ? Does this look like confidence ? No, madam, every moment that shows me your merit, only serves to increase my diffidence and confusion. Here let me continue—.

Sir Cha. I can hold it no longer. Charles, Charles, how hast thou deceived me ! Is this your indifference, your uninteresting conversation ?

Hard. Your cold contempt ; your formal interview ! What have you to say now ?

80 *Mar.* That I'm all amazement ! What can it mean ?

Hard. It means that you can say and unsay things at pleasure : that you can address a lady in private, and deny it in public : that you have one story for us, and another for my daughter.

Mar. Daughter ! This lady your daughter ?

Hard. Yes, sir, my only daughter ; my Kate ; whose else should she be ?

Mar. Oh, the devil !

Miss Hard. Yes, sir, that very identical tall squinting 90 lady you were pleased to take me for [*curtseying*]; she that you addressed as the mild, modest, sentimental man of gravity, and the bold, forward, agreeable Rattle of the Ladies' Club. Ha! ha! ha!

Mar. Zounds! there's no bearing this; it's worse than death!

Miss Hard. In which of your characters, sir, will you give us leave to address you? As the faltering gentleman, with looks on the ground, that speaks just to be heard, and hates hypocrisy; or the loud confident 100 creature, that keeps it up with Mrs. Mantrap, and old Miss Biddy Buckskin, till three in the morning? Ha! ha! ha!

Mar. O, curse on my noisy head. I never attempted to be impudent yet, that I was not taken down. I must be gone.

Hard. By the hand of my body, but you shall not. I see it was all a mistake, and I am rejoiced to find it. You shall not, sir, I tell you. I know she'll forgive you. Won't you forgive him, Kate? We'll all forgive you. 110 Take courage, man. [*They retire, she tormenting him, to the back scene.*]

Enter MRS. HARDCASTLE and TONY

Mrs. Hard. So, so, they're gone off. Let them go; I care not.

Hard. Who gone?

Mrs. Hard. My dutiful niece and her gentleman, Mr. Hastings, from town. He who came down with our modest visitor here.

Sir Cha. Who, my honest George Hastings? As

120 worthy a fellow as lives, and the girl could not have made a more prudent choice.

Hard. Then, by the hand of my body, I'm proud of the connexion.

Mrs. Hard. Well, if he has taken away the lady, he has not taken her fortune ; that remains in this family to console us for her loss.

Hard. Sure, Dorothy, you would not be so mercenary ?

Mrs. Hard. Ay, that's my affair, not yours.

Hard. But you know if your son, when of age, refuses
130 to marry his cousin, her whole fortune is then at her own disposal.

Mrs. Hard. Ay, but he's not of age, and she has not thought proper to wait for his refusal.

Enter HASTINGS and MISS NEVILLE

Mrs. Hard. [*Aside.*—What, returned so soon ! I begin not to like it.

Hast. [*To HARDCASTLE.*—For my late attempt to fly off with your niece let my present confusion be my punishment. We are now come back, to appeal from your justice to your humanity. By her father's consent, I
140 first paid her my addresses, and our passions were first founded in duty.

Miss Nev. Since his death, I have been obliged to stoop to dissimulation to avoid oppression. In an hour of levity, I was ready to give up my fortune to secure my choice. But I am now recovered from the delusion, and hope from your tenderness what is denied me from a nearer connexion.

Mrs. Hard. Pshaw, pshaw ! this is all but the whining end of a modern novel.

Hard. Be it what it will, I'm glad they're come back 150 to reclaim their due. Come hither, Tony, boy. Do you refuse this lady's hand whom I now offer you ?

Tony. What signifies my refusing ? You know I can't refuse her till I'm of age, father.

Hard. While I thought concealing your age, boy, was likely to conduce to your improvement, I concurred with your mother's desire to keep it secret. But since I find she turns it to a wrong use, I must now declare you have been of age these three months.

Tony. Of age ! Am I of age, father ? 160

Hard. Above three months.

Tony. Then you'll see the first use I'll make of my liberty. [*Taking Miss NEVILLE's hand.*—Witness all men by these presents, that I, Anthony Lumpkin, Esquire, of BLANK place, refuse you, Constantia Neville, spinster, of no place at all, for my true and lawful wife. So Constance Neville may marry whom she pleases, and Tony Lumpkin is his own man again.

Sir Cha. O brave 'squire !

Hast. My worthy friend ! 170

Mrs. Hard. My undutiful offspring !

Mar. Joy, my dear George ! I give you joy sincerely. And could I prevail upon my little tyrant here to be less arbitrary, I should be the happiest man alive, if you would return me the favour.

Hast. [*To Miss HARDCASTLE.*—Come, madam, you are now driven to the very last scene of all your contrivances. I know you like him, I'm sure he loves you, and you must and shall have him.

Hard. [*Joining their hands.*—And I say so too. And, 180 Mr. Marlow, if she makes as good a wife as she has a

daughter, I don't believe you'll ever repent your bargain. So now to supper. To-morrow we shall gather all the poor of the parish about us, and the mistakes of the night shall be crowned with a merry morning. So, boy, take her ; and as you have been mistaken in the mistress, my wish is, that you may never be mistaken in the wife.

[Exeunt Omnes.]

NOTES

THE DEDICATION.

Samuel Johnson was the great literary dictator in the eighteenth century, and the champion of common-sense. He is remembered more for the influence he exerted than for his writings, which, with the exception of *The Lives of the Poets*, are read less than his life as recorded by Boswell. He was a constant friend to Goldsmith, and it was largely through him that the play was accepted at all. This is what Goldsmith means by "particular reasons."

L. 11. Colman, the manager of Covent Garden, only put on the play when Goldsmith had taken it to Garrick at Drury Lane.

L. 14. Late in the season. It was produced on March 15, 1773, and the season closed on May 31. Holidays and actors' benefits only left twelve occasions for it to be performed.

PROLOGUE.

Garrick was then manager of Drury Lane. He had been as doubtful as Colman over the play, but wrote the prologue when he saw signs of a change in public taste.

Mr. Woodward, who had been Lofly in *The Good-Natur'd Man*, refused the part of Tony Lumpkin and only spoke the prologue in this comedy.

Ll. 3-4. 'Tis not alone. Adapted from *Hamlet*, Act I. Scene 2, where he says :

" 'Tis not alone my inky cloak, good mother,

That can denote me truly . . .

But I have that within which passeth show."

L. 6. A-dying. Because of the sugary sentiment with which she was dosed. See paragraph on sentimental comedy in the edition of *The Good-Natur'd Man* in this series.

Ll. 12-15. Shuter, and Poor Ned. Edward Shuter, who played Mr. Hardcastle, after his performance as Croaker in Goldsmith's first play.

L. 13. a mawkish drab. A worthless woman fond of sickly sentimentality.

L. 14. sentimentals. Cheap and easy expressions of false emotion.

L. 25. All is not gold. This comes, not from *The Merchant of Venice*, but from Dryden's *The Hind and the Panther*.

L. 31. morals. Not so much morals, as moral reflections.

L. 34. A Doctor. A doctor because the Muse was sick, and also because Goldsmith, during his European wanderings, had picked up the title of doctor, though he seems never to have had a degree or diploma.

L. 45. The College, you. This is a too compressed statement—a fault to which eighteenth-century versifiers were prone. It means, “you, who are the College, must back his pretensions”; “he is on examination, you are the judges.”

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

Mr. Lewes. Charles Lewes had previously been Harlequin. When he was successful as young Marlow, Goldsmith wrote an Epilogue for his benefit performance on May 17, 1773.

Mr. Quick. John Quick's success as Tony Lumpkin justified his promotion from the Post-boy in *The Good-Natur'd Man*. Goldsmith adapted a scene from Sedley's translation of Bruey's *Le Grandeur* for his benefit on May 8, 1773.

Mrs. Green had been Garnet in *The Good-Natur'd Man*, which play was revived for her benefit on May 3, 1773.

Mrs. Bulkley had also been in the earlier piece, as Miss Richland. A song, *Ah me! when shall I marry me?* had to be omitted from *She Stoops to Conquer*, because she could not sing. This disability also caused considerable trouble over the Epilogue.

ACT I. SCENE 1.

L. 12. the very basket. This was a large wicker receptacle fixed on the hind axle-tree, and used for the conveyance, generally of luggage, sometimes of passengers. See Hogarth's *Country Inn Yards*, 1747, and Moritz's *Travels in England in 1782*.

L. 15. rumbling. Creaking and groaning, from its dilapidated state.

L. 19. Prince Eugene, of Savoy, was the Austrian commander who supported Marlborough against the French at Blenheim, Oudenarde, etc. He fought independently at Turin and Toulon, and recovered Belgrade (Act II.) from the Turks in 1717.

L. 20. **Marlborough.** The duke commanded the forces of the Grand Alliance against France from 1702 till the end of 1711, when he was dismissed. Vanbrugh, the architect and dramatist, designed a mansion for him at Woodstock in celebration of his victory at Blenheim, and Sara, his duchess, exercised great influence over the Queen.

L. 28. **Darby and Joan.** These were the names of a married couple, living in the West Riding during some part of the century. They became famous for the happiness of their lives together, and a ballad was written about them. It is probably by Henry Woodfall, though it has been attributed to Prior.

L. 30. **make money of that.** See what satisfaction the answer to that brings you.

L. 37. **Nor ever will.** Note how vivaciously the reader is informed about Tony.

L. 53. **Mrs. Frizzle's face.** Forster in his *Life of Goldsmith* (Book IV. Chap. 15, n. 4) relates how this trick was played on the poet himself by Lord Clare's daughter.

L. 78. **The Three Pigeons.** There was an inn with this name between Abingdon and Thame. It is idle to speculate as to which, if any, the author was thinking of, but it should be remembered that the inn at Lissay, his Irish home, was only called by this title after the play.

L. 84. **the exciseman.** An officer who collects the duty on imported goods before sale.

L. 170. **Am I in face? Am I looking my best?**

L. 200. **the very pink of perfection.** "Pink" was much used by the Elizabethans (cf. *Romeo and Juliet*, Act I. Scene 4, line 61), to mean "flower"; a shoe stamped with rosettes was "well pinked." By the eighteenth century, it meant the "highest type of."

L. 223. **improvements.** Alterations in the laying-out of the gardens, etc.

L. 225. **Would it were bed-time.** This quotation from *Henry IV.*, Part I (Act V. Scene 1, line 125), heightens the pathetic effect, for it is Falstaff's exclamation on the eve of the battle of Shrewsbury.

SCENE 2.

L. 12. **Lethe . . . Styx.** The rivers of Forgetfulness and Hate in the lower world. The gods in Homer swore their most sacred oaths by them.

L. 16. **methodist.** The term, dating from 1730, began to be applied to the circle that centred in the Wesleys at Oxford.

L. 23. the pigeon. The dupe.

L. 37. nothing that's low. Goldsmith ridicules the dramatic conventions of the time by expressing them through drunken rustics, thus showing how outworn the fashion was.

L. 41. concatenation. A chain of thoughts or events.

L. 47. "Water Parted." This was a song from Arne's opera *Artaxerxes*, 1762.

The Minuet in "Ariadne." By Handel. It came at the end of the overture, and was supposed to be the best thing in the opera.

L. 70. woundily. Exceedingly. Used deprecatingly—"much too like."

L. 77. Father-in-law was often used in the eighteenth century for "step-father."

L. 79. grumbletonian. Professional grumbler. This was originally a nickname for the "Country Party," as opposed to the "Court Party," in the reign of William and Mary.

L. 105. We wanted no ghost. Marlow makes use of Horatio's reply to Hamlet, when the prince tells him :

"There's ne'er a villain dwelling in all Denmark,
But he's an arrant knave."

The actual phrase is "There needs no ghost . . . to tell us this."

L. 116. trolloping. Untidy, slovenly.

L. 149. find out the longitude. Parliament in 1714 offered a large reward for the discovery of an accurate means of determining the longitude. A John Harrison succeeded, but had difficulty in getting paid, till the King interposed, and he received his money in 1773, the year of *She Stoops to Conquer*.

L. 169. You ben't sending them to your father's ? This was a reminiscence of a trick played on Goldsmith in his youth.

L. 184. blade. A gay fellow, or bully, such a disposition being supposed to be indicated by his wearing a sword.

ACT II. SCENE 1.

L. 57. numskulls. A variant for blockheads. It signifies that their skulls are (so thick as to be) incapable of feeling anything.

L. 64. By the elevens. This is thought to stand for "by the eleven apostles."

L. 81. inflame a reckoning. Put up the prices, swell the bill. See *The Two Noble Kinsmen*, Act III. Scene 5, line 130 :

"Then mine Host
And his fat spouse, that welcomes to their cost
The galled traveller, and with a beck'ning
Informs the tapster to inflame the reck'ning."

L. 117. comet . . . burning mountain. In 1767 there had been a violent eruption of Vesuvius, and two years later an extremely brilliant comet appeared.

L. 155. prepossessing. Here used in the opposite sense from ours, and meaning, creating an impression which is unfavourable. Izaak Walton employs it in this way in *The Compleat Angler*.

L. 158. duchesses of Drury Lane. This is usually taken to mean women of showy appearance, but as Drury Lane was a disreputable quarter, "duchesses" may be used, for the sake of alliteration, to mean the same as "queans." In any case, the term "duchess" traditionally implies haughtiness, real or assumed.

L. 185. Denain. The French under Marshal Villars defeated the allies under Prince Eugene at Denain, near Valenciennes, in July, 1712. But by this time Marlborough had already been superseded, so someone's memory is at fault.

L. 188. *Ventre d'or*. That is, a gold-embroidered front.

L. 234. the mistakes of government. There were troubles in Bengal and Madras; there was Lord North's disastrous administration; and there were the American colonies about to be lost, the Boston tea-raid taking place in 1773.

L. 238. *Hyder Ally* was the Sultan of Mysore, 1761-1782, in the time of Clive and Hastings. He intrigued against the Madras Government, and in 1769 dictated his own terms.

Ally Cawn. The Ali Khan was Nawab of Bengal under British protection (1760-1764). The battle of Buxar, 1764, sent him into flight, and the government of Bengal was in chaos when Warren Hastings was appointed Governor in 1772.

Ally Croaker was the name of a popular Irish song beginning :

"There lived a man in Ballinacrasay
Who wanted a wife to make him un'asy."

It was about twenty years old when this play was produced.

L. 247. Westminster Hall. The Law Courts were held there until the opening of the present courts in 1882.

L. 308. The Joiners' Company were famous for their good cheer.

L. 324. a Florentine. Described in a contemporary dictionary as "a made Dish of Minced Meats, Currants, Spice, Eggs, etc., Bak'd."

L. 325. taffety cream. A dish of thickened cream which looks like taffeta silk.

L. 327. green and yellow dinner. Horace Walpole, writing in 1765, describes a dinner at which, "instead of substantials, there was nothing but a profusion of plates striped red, green and yellow, gilt plate, blacks and uniforms."

L. 381. where even among slaves. The Duke of Gloucester, by reason of the Royal Marriage Act of 1772, had been unable to marry Lady Waldegrave legally. On the first night, these words were "instantly applied to His Royal Highness," who sat in one of the boxes.

L. 574. Ranelagh, St. James's, or Tower Wharf. The first two of these were fashionable resorts, noted for concerts and masquerades. The mention of *Tower Wharf*, the centre of fisherwomen and thieves, shows that Hastings was amusing himself at Mrs. Hardcastle's expense.

L. 579. The Pantheon, the Grotto Gardens, the Borough. The Pantheon was an imitation of the Roman building, erected in Oxford Street in 1772. In the *St. James's Chronicle* for May 7, 1772, there is a passage describing the Pantheon. "Such a scene of disorder, riot and confusion . . . of all the teahouses in the environs of London, the most exceptionable that I have ever been in is the Pantheon." The site is now occupied by a wine-merchant. The *Grotto Gardens* may be identified with *The New Spring Gardens*, the old name of Vauxhall Gardens. By her inclusion of *The Borough*, Mrs. Hardcastle falls into the trap, for Southwark Fair, to which she refers, was definitely rowdy.

L. 582. The Scandalous Magazine. This was *The Town and Country Magazine*, which earned its notoriety by publishing tête-à-tête portraits of people often unknown to each other. See Garrick's Prologue to *The School for Scandal*.

L. 585. this head. This style of dressing the hair.

L. 586. dégaçée. "Showing an unstudied ease."

L. 587. friseur. Hairdresser. Literally, "one who curls." In Wright's *Caricature History* of 1768, the following lines are an amusing commentary on the elaborate hair-dressing of the day:

"When he scents the mingled steam
Which your plastered heads are rich in,
Lard and meal and clouted cream,
Can he love a walking kitchen?"

All these were the friseur's materials.

L. 593. inoculation. Lady Mary Wortley Montagu introduced it from Turkey in 1721. Jenner's treatment against small-pox by vaccine was not known till 1799.

L. 607. Gothic. Rude, barbarous. The same author says in the Introduction to one of his Histories, "That late, and we may add Gothic, practice of using a multiplicity of notes."

L. 609. tête. A head of false hair.

L. 610. At your age. Hastings is really enjoying himself with his irony.

L. 641. crack. A lie.

L. 648. Stage direction (Measuring), i.e. back to back. (See *The Vicar of Wakefield*.)

L. 659. receipt. Recipe.

L. 662. The Compleat Housewife. A well-known eighteenth-century handbook of household medicine.

L. 664. Quincy, who died in 1723, wrote four years earlier a *Complete English Dispensatory*, which ran through many editions.

L. 709. as loud as a hog in a gate. That is, when it has stuck and cannot move.

L. 716. Bandbox! Tony, asked to allow Miss Neville some beauty, replies that it comes out of her bandbox. "She's all a made-up thing."

L. 723. Anon was the usual reply of a servant when called, meaning "I'm coming" or "In a moment." Here, it is a request to Hastings to be more direct. "Put it more clearly—I'm coming (or getting) to see what you mean."

ACT III. SCENE 1.

L. 36. mauvaise honte. Bashfulness.

L. 44. Bully Dawson. A notorious Whitefriars ruffian. In *The Spectator*, No. 2, Sir Roger de Coverley "kicked Bully Dawson in a coffee-house for calling him youngster."

L. 96. bobs. Pendants, ear-rings.

L. 98. my genius. An exclamation of surprise; perhaps a corruption of "Genius" or of "Jesus."

L. 100. amused. Deluded.

L. 126. Morrice! Prance! An exclamation meaning "Get off quickly." *Morrice* is connected with "morrice-dance."

L. 139. marcasites are the crystallised forms of iron pyrites. They take a good polish, can be made to resemble gold or silver ore, and were very popular for personal decoration in the eighteenth century.

L. 151. rose- and table-cut things. Rose-cut stones have a smooth round surface, as distinguished from jewels with numerous facets; table-cut stones have a large *table* or front face and bevelled edges.

L. 188. garnets are semi-precious stones which in colour and shape resemble the grains of a pomogranate. The name comes through the French, from medieval Latin.

L. 204. Catherine-wheel. A rotating firework, called after the spiked wheel of St. Catherine's martyrdom.

L. 256. Cherry is the landlord's daughter in Farquhar's most successful comedy, *The Beaux' Stratagem*, produced in 1707.

L. 258. but when. Except when. Otherwise, the maid's remark would imply that Miss Hardcastle had disobeyed her father's injunction.

L. 280. The Lion . . . Angel . . . Lamb. Each room of an inn used to have its own name. This practice is still kept up at the Shakespeare Hotel, Stratford-on-Avon, for the benefit of American tourists.

L. 282. outrageous. Clamorous.

L. 343. obstrepalous. Miss Hardcastle adds colour to her impersonation by a few tricks of speech. This one is a corruption of "obstreperous," meaning noisy.

L. 357. The Ladies' Club. In *The Gentleman's Magazine* for 1770, pp. 414-5 give the rules of the Female Coterie in Albemarle Street, to which this is an allusion. Men were admitted, and among the members were Horace Walpole, C. J. Fox and the Waldegraves.

L. 366. Miss Biddy Buckskin. On the early nights of the play this was a much clearer reference to Miss Rachael Lloyd, an elderly member of the Coterie, for the Christian name was originally Rachael. But Goldsmith altered it in the printed copies.

L. 388. I never nicked seven. To nick seven is to hazard one's money on seven. Ames-ace (*i.e.* ambs-ace, both aces) is the lowest possible throw, and so to throw it thrice running after "nicking seven" is the worst possible luck.

ACT IV. SCENE 1.

L. 175. *The Rake's Progress*. These engravings by Hogarth (1697-1764), depicting the ruin of a young man who abandoned himself to revelry, were published in 1735.

L. 216. in caricatura. The print-shops, especially in the Strand, were full of caricatures of the famous macaronis such as

Lord Anorum, Ensign Horncock (who was the martial macaroni), and Mr. Thrale.

Dullissimo Macaroni. In 1780 the dandies began to affect foreign fashions, and this name for them is supposed to have arisen from their liking for the not generally popular Italian macaroni. Forster gives the following description of them in his *Life of Goldsmith*. "Besides red-heeled shoes, the macaronis were distinguished in 1772 by an immense knot of artificial hair behind, a very small cocked hat, an enormous walking-stick with long tassels, and extremely close-cut jacket, waistcoat, breeches. In the following year a very lofty head-dress was added and an immense nosegay."

L. 280. Whistle-jacket was a famous racehorse that belonged to Lord Rookingham, running "with abundant glory at York and Newmarket in 1754."

L. 309. haspicholls. This malapropism for harpsichords seems to have been in popular use, for Gray uses it in a letter to Chute in 1746, and it occurs in the first act of Foote's play *Taste*, 1762.

a parcel of bobbins. In the making of pillow lace each thread is held by a long pin of wood or bone called a bobbin, and these pins are flung to and fro by hand with great quickness and dexterity.

L. 313. incontinently. Immediately.

L. 353. izzard. An old name for the letter Z.

L. 363. The Shake-bag Club. A shake-bag was a large fighting-cock.

L. 405. so nice. So subtle (in inventing such detail).

L. 415. old Bedlam. Bedlam was the familiar name for the hospital of St. Mary of Bethlehem for lunatics, in St. George's Fields. It means here, in consequence, a regular asylum or, rather, "as much noise as a regular asylum would make if they broke loose."

L. 428. with baskets. Horo, singlesticks. So called from the wickerwork handguards.

ACT V. SCENE 1.

L. 127. place yourselves behind that screen. This is one of the stock devices, like the arrival of Sir Charles, and the will, with which comedy of all times and places finds it so hard to dispense.

SCENE 2.

L. 16. rabbit me. From the French, *rabattre*, to beat down, humble; cf. rebate.

L. 53. kiss the hangman. This was sometimes done by criminals as a sign of forgiveness.

L. 65. without knowing one inch of the way. In the opening scene of the play, Mrs. Hardcastle complained that there was not "a creature in the whole country but ourselves that does not take a trip to town now and then." So, if this can be taken to imply that she hardly ever left the old house, this incident is not so improbable as the first-night audience found it.

SCENE 3.

L. 184. the mistakes of the night. This is the secondary title of the play, which caused great difficulties over its naming. *The Belle's Stratagem* (afterwards used by Mrs. Cowley) and *The Old House a New Inn* were other titles suggested; the one Goldsmith decided on is generally supposed to have been prompted by Dryden's line in *The Hind and the Panther*:

"But kneels to conquer and but stoops to rise."

DATES IN GOLDSMITH'S LIFE

1728. Born at Pallas, County Longford, Ireland.

1744. Went to Trinity College, Dublin.

1752. Went to Edinburgh, to study medicine.

1754-6. Travelled about Europe.

1759. *Present State of Polite Learning in Europe.*

1764. *The Traveller.*

1766. *The Vicar of Wakefield* published (written 1761).

1770. *The Deserted Village.*

1773. *She Stoops to Conquer.*

1774. Died.

QUESTIONS

1. What connection with the play have George Colman, Bet Bouncer, Prince Eugene, Charles Lewes, Biddy Buckskin, Mrs. Bulkley, Dr. Johnson ?

2. Do you think any incidents in the play were suggested to Goldsmith by personal adventures ?

3. Give your reasons for agreeing with Dr. Johnson's verdict that " the incidents are so prepared as not to seem improbable."

4. Explain the allusions in :

(1) " There was a time, indeed, I fretted myself about the mistakes of government, like other people."

(2) " Your friseur is a Frenchman, I suppose ? "

(3) " Since inoculation began, there is no such thing to be seen as a plain woman."

(4) " We could as soon find out the longitude ! "

(5) " The jewels, my dear Con, shall be yours incontinently."

(6) " The genteel thing is the genteel thing at any time."

5. What is the meaning of Gothic, anon, haspicholls, basket, pigeon, concatenation, improvements, crack, *tête*, Quincy, rose-and table-cut, Morrice, outrageous, oaf, spark, competence, as these words are used in the play ?

6. " Come, madam, you are now driven to the very last scene of all your contrivances." To whom is this said, and what are the contrivances ?

7. What reasons have Mr. Hardcastle and his daughter for their different opinions of young Marlow ?

SUBJECTS FOR SHORT ESSAYS

1. Horace Walpole found the play "the lowest of all farces," and continued to observe, "The drift tends to no moral, no edification of any kind; the situations, however, are well imagined and make one laugh in spite of the grossness of the dialogue, the false witticisms, the total improbability of the whole plan and conduct. But what disgusts me most is that, though the characters are very low and aim at low humour, not one of them says a sentence that is natural or marks any character at all." How much of this do you think true?

2. Describe the first night of *The Stoops to Conquer* as it might appear to one who had access both to dressing-rooms and boxes in the theatre.

3. "The undertaking a comedy, not merely sentimental, was very dangerous." Why?

4. Discuss Goldsmith's life in the light of this criticism of his habits: "Though the acquisition of useful knowledge was his avowed object, an idle passion for wandering was the real motive."

5. Contrast the three young men, Hastings, Marlow, and Tony Lumpkin.

6. What insight into the country life of the time does this comedy give us?

7. Which is the chief reason for the play's original success and enduring appeal—novelty of situation, following of general fashion, clever characterisation, or freshness of dialogue?

HELPS TO FURTHER STUDY

1. Percy's *Memoir of Goldsmith*, published in 1801, was "the first considerable authentic biography," and has remained "the basis for a large part of the more ambitious biographies which have superseded it." Among these may be mentioned the *Lives* by John Forster and Austin Dobson. The Everyman edition of the *Plays* contains a twenty-page Introduction by Austin Dobson, useful to those who have not time or means to consult the *Lives* at length, and the volume by W. Black in the *English Men of Letters* series should be used. Mr. John Bailey's *Dr. Johnson and his Circle* (Home University Library) touches on Goldsmith at several points, and gives an account of his friends.

2. For eighteenth-century life, the most detailed works are Sir Walter Besant's *Survey of London*, volume 5, and H. D. Traill's *Social England*. But Boswell's *Life of Johnson*, Horace Walpole's *Letters* (both of which are obtainable in the Everyman editions) and Fanny Burney's *Diary* have the entertainment as well as the authority of contemporary participation. There are some chapters on Fashion and Gossip (with amusing illustrations from magazines, etc.) of the time in *English Women in Life and Letters* by M. Phillips and W. S. Tomkinson. This is light reading, but it makes clear the allusions to dress, dicing and dancing in which plays of this period abound, and may well serve as an introduction to the more serious volumes.

3. Goldsmith has himself written on the eighteenth-century theatres in Letter 79 of *The Citizen of the World*, and there is an essay on "Sentimental Comedy" among his works. Professor Saintsbury's chapter on "Eighteenth-Century Drama" in *A Short History of English Literature* should certainly be studied, and Ashley Dukes' *Drama*, in the Home University Library, is concise and clear, besides containing a list of books on the theatre. These can be supplemented by :

Shakespeare to Sheridan. By A. Thaler. Oxford University Press.

Sheridan to Robertson. By E. B. Watson. Harvard University Press.

Late Eighteenth-Century Drama (1750-1800). By Allardyce Nicoll. Cambridge University Press.

Professor Nicoll has also written a book, published by Harrap, on *The Development of the Theatre*. The eighteenth-century section has many illustrations of the theatres and settings of the time, and is particularly valuable for its information on stage-practice.

There are interesting chapters on "Drama, Stage, and Music" and on "The Social Scene" in *English Men and Manners in the Eighteenth Century*, by A. S. Turberville. Oxford University Press, 1926.

